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The
Young Christian
and His Bible

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The Young Christian and His Bible

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By
WILLIAM HENRY GEISTWEIT

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TO MY WIFE
SARAH JANETTE GEER GEISTWEIT

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FRIENDLY WORDS.

It is assumed that those who undertake to follow these studies have certain beliefs: the existence of God, the revelation of God in Christ, the fact of sin, and redemption in and through Christ.

The young *Christian* is addressed in these chapters. It is a clearly defined effort to strengthen the faith of young Christians, and build them up in the Life so marvelously portrayed in the Bible. The spirit of argumentative discussion has been avoided as far as possible. Many questions naturally arise which can not be considered here. *Young Christians* defines the limitations of the work.

It has been a difficult, though a delightful task. To bring together these themes and present them in the hope that they may be of interest and worth to young and growing people, has been the work of recent months. The writer regrets the haste with which the work has been done. It is to be hoped that more time will be given to future writers in the courses.

Some of the chapters—notably V., VI., VII.—were submitted to some leading scholars of various “schools” of theological opinion. Thanks are herewith extended to them for their courtesy, kindly spirit, and friendly criticism. The brotherly love displayed is a matter of profound gratitude.

Special mention should be made of the help of my dear friend, Dr. Z. Grenell, of Detroit, Michigan, who read the entire manuscript. His loving interest, kindly suggestions, open-hearted and helpful criticisms, have been invaluable. The final proofs of the book were

read by my brother, Rev. Irvin Theodore Geistweit, who also followed the work through the printers' hands.

None of these deserve more hearty mention than my wife, whose sympathetic helpfulness has been constant. To her this book is lovingly dedicated.

To TEACHERS.—While this book may be considered worth reading, as other books are read, it has been prepared with a view to class study. The numbered paragraphs, with Summary and Quiz ought to be of great help in teaching. The "Suggestions for Writing and Discussion," and "Supplemental Study—Class Drill," are purely optional. Some classes may not be able to take them in addition to the other work; but upon systematic and constant reviewing will depend much of the interest and practical benefit.

Let the teacher read the book through before taking up the course. Then have the class review constantly—and doubtless good results will issue.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. These chapters can be studied with the help of the Bible. It may be well, however, to suggest books which have been referred to, or consulted in the course of writing.

The Bible—Its Origin and Nature. By Marcus Dodds.

An unusually helpful book.

Systematic Theology—By Augustus H. Strong, D. D., LL. D.

An Outline of Christian Theology—By William N. Clarke, D. D.

Why Is Christianity True?—By E. Y. Mullins, D. D.

The Monuments and the Old Testament—By Prof. Ira M. Price, Ph. D.

The Divine Library of the Old Testament—By A. F. Kirkpatrick, B. D.

The Oracles of God—By W. Sanday, D. D.

The Problem of the Old Testament—By Prof. James Orr, D. D.

The Christian View of God and the World—By Prof.
James Orr, D. D.
The Death of Christ—By James Denney, D. D.
Beginnings of History—By Francois Lenormant.
How God Inspired the Bible—By J. Paterson Smyth.
How We Got Our Bible—By J. Paterson Smyth.
The Parchments of the Faith—By George E. Merrill,
D. D.
The Gospel of the Divine Sacrifice—By Charles Cuth-
bert Hall, D. D.
The Universal Elements of the Christian Religion—
By Charles Cuthbert Hall, D. D.
A Dictionary of the Bible—Hastings.
Westcott's "Introduction."
Essential Christianity—By Hugh Price Hughes.

So the little book is sent on its way. If it shall be used of Him, if it shall lead to a greater knowledge of the Bible, if it shall urge to yet greater study of the Book of God, it will be compensation enough.

W. H. GEISTWEIT.

"MEADOWCREST,"
South Haven, Michigan.

August, 1906.

NOTE.—The author will be glad to hear from every teacher who undertakes these studies. He will be glad to keep in constant touch with such teachers. He should be addressed at 324 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

CHAPTER I.

THE WORLD BEFORE THE BIBLE.

Have you ever thought of the condition of the world before there was a Bible?

THE COMMON BOOK.

1. On every side we see bibles. The Bible is the commonest book in the world. On almost every table, or book-shelf, there is a Bible. Other books make their appearance, the world has their titles on its lips and then they pass away to make room for new books; but the Bible keeps right on its way, every year adding to its sales and evident popularity. The most popular book in the world is the Bible. The most abused book in the world is the Bible. The most frequently quoted book in the world is the Bible. Generally speaking, the voice of the Bible is the end of an argument. There are those who hate it; who say all manner of things against it; but they are the few as over against the many who accept its final word even though they may not accept its teachings or its ideals.

There was a time when the world did not have a Bible.

ISOLATED AND INFREQUENT REVELATIONS.

2. It must not be assumed, however, that there was no revelation of God to man.

There were revelations many. God spoke "unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners;" he also spoke to others, but the revelations were isolated, infrequent, and often difficult to comprehend. The difficulty was increased by the fact that there were naturally many who claimed revelations who did not tell the whole truth. There was no standard by which these things could be determined. When we consider that the Bible as we understand and know it is only a few hundred years old, the whole story is all the more surprising and fascinating. Nowadays when a man claims to have a revelation, we have a standard by which to test both the man and his revelation. If he is out of harmony with the Bible, the world rejects him. If he is in harmony with it we say at once that the Bible has inspired his revelation. We hear men say that the word of God not only came, but that it is ever coming; yet somehow there is nothing in the history of the world to show that anything greater than the Bible has ever appeared or that is appearing in our day.

There was a time when the world did not have a Bible.

Did God speak to men? How did he reveal himself? It is not conceivable that God should not reveal himself in some way to men.

RELIGIOUS IMPRESSIONS.

3. Men received impressions of truth and gave them to their friends round about. These

impressions were often worthful, and had in them the real Spirit of God. They were passed from mouth to mouth, and in time became part of the folklore or traditions of the people. They became the permanent possessions of the people; yet were unsatisfactory by reason of the failure to properly transcribe these teachings. Around such traditions many strange things grew, until the original truth was almost obliterated. .

VISIONS AND SPIRITUAL APPREHENSION.

4. Men had visions. Perhaps in the night-watches, when some pious soul stood out in the open, looking up to the stars, pondering the greatness of the world, the mystery of it all, and above all the mystery of himself, his heart was sensitized to divine things, and God came by his Spirit and talked with the entranced and spiritual-minded worshiper. He doubtless told the story of his night-visions, but the workaday world was unsympathetic, and the vision was not believed. The revelation by vision was unrecorded, unrelated to other visions, and in so far was unsatisfactory and incomplete.

There were dreams and voices which came to men from the otherwhere—from God—but they were isolated, incomplete, and often indistinct. There being no definite and clear method by which such revelations could be authenticated, dissatisfaction and unbelief were natural.

LAW IN THE NATURAL HEART.

5. There was a natural revelation. God did not leave himself without witness in the hearts of men. It is quite clear from Paul's teaching in Romans 2:14, etc., that, though the heathen did not have the law, as the Jews had it, yet they were responsible for a certain revelation which they could not deny—the law of right and wrong written upon their hearts. And though they would not be judged as the Hebrews would surely be, yet there was no escape from judgment on any account. This natural revelation was good so far as it went, but it did not go far enough. It was a world without a Bible; and natural religion, by which we may here understand the inner consciousness of right and wrong, was never satisfactory, seeing that it never produced greatness of individual character, general purity of life, or national purity.

REVELATION IN NATURE.

6. Natural religion might be explained yet farther. God revealed himself in nature. The voices of nature have always been many and clear and beautiful. Natural laws reveal a beneficent Creator. But nature's Bible, the revelation of God in wonderful creative power, beautiful sunsets, landscape, seascape, sky-scape, rarely affects human life to the point of changing it for the better. It has always been true that "every prospect pleases, and only man

■ vile." The North American Indians heard the voice of the Great Spirit in the mighty thunder. They lived in the most beautiful land upon which the sun ever shone; mountains and valleys, hills and plains, seas and lakes, "where summer spreads profusion round," and winter covers the land with glory—yet they were ever a blood-thirsty lot. They heard the Voice, there was a law within and a great printed page without, but they still were savages. Revelation through nature is interpreted in all its glory when interpreted through that greater revelation, the book we call the word of God. Only the devout soul can sing with the Psalmist, "the heavens declare the glory of God." (Psalm 19: 1, etc.) 2

REVELATION IN OTHER BOOKS.

7. There were "revelations" which were recorded. How far these revelations were genuine, coming from God, it is not easy to say. Later on we shall consider them somewhat fully. It is enough to say here that there were "sacred" books before the Bible. Men tried to teach certain truths which they but dimly understood. There was a mixture of error with an element of truth. Doubtless some of these revelations and teachings were of God, but there was no articulated form of truth reaching to the full revelation of God as we know it in the Bible. Many of these "books" and tablets contained more or less historical truths, which were obscure until in

the fulness of time God caused them to be taken and used in their proper relationship to the great body of truth now known as the Bible. They lack intelligence, coherence, and redeeming power.

Imagine, then, the world without a Bible; think of human history without a Bible—and we begin to realize what a wonderful legacy we have in the book lying upon the table yonder.

THE BIBLE DISAPPEARING.

8. Imagine, now, if you can, the Bible suddenly removed from the world, no voice of God speaking to us through the printed page; the book disappearing from the pulpit, the Sunday-schools, the home, the private chamber; all quotations in literature and on monuments and tablets effaced; all Scripture scenes represented by art vanished, leaving the canvas and the scroll blank, and the marble a heap of dust; all memory of the sacred words obliterated from the mind of man, and only a faint tradition remaining that there was such a revelation. Imagine the cry that would lift itself to heaven for some word which could give assurance of the being and character of God; some word of comfort to cheer us in distress; some message of hope concerning the life that is to be, the land that is just beyond. Imagine the despairing wail of the world as it realized that it was slipping back into darkness and death!

Henry Van Dyke, in his "Story of a Lost

Word" gives a vivid picture of what it could mean to a man who had lost the name "God." In a recent book, "When It Was Dark," a striking illustration is drawn of the effect on the world should the resurrection of Jesus be proven to be nothing other than a myth. To lose the name of God, to find the great foundation stone of Christianity simply a legend, would mean the darkness of despair to the world. And such calamity would overtake us should the Bible be removed from the earth, from the memory of men. In an old book, now out of print, the author describes a dream in which every word of the Bible was suddenly removed from the earth. It was more than a dream, it was a hideous nightmare. Bibles were mere blank books; the great piles of Bibles in repositories became nothing more than piles of blank books. Alarm at the loss became universal. Even people who were not in the habit of reading the Bible, or caring much for it were greatly distressed, one worldly man remarking that the loss of the Bible would have a fearfully "bad effect on the public virtue of the country." Yet memory remained, and there was some comfort left to the world. Our thought carries us back to a time when there was no Bible, and no memory of one.

It is not so very long ago when the Bible existed only in separate portions, when a large part of it was unwritten, because much of it—its chief glory—was not lived or enacted; so it could not be written. It was a poor world—

a world without a Bible. That there should be a glad thanksgiving in all our hearts, goes without saying. What a dark world without a Bible, what a day-dawn for us all in its possession.

SUMMARY.

There was a time when there was no Bible in the world. God spoke to men through religious impressions, visions, by his law written on their hearts. There was also revelation through nature. None of these "revelations" were complete or satisfactory. There was no written message, no definite word. It was a sad, dark world without the Bible. As twilight is to day, so are natural revelations to the clear revelation of God and Christ and the whole body of truth now known as the Bible.

QUIZ.

How did God speak to men in ancient days? (Heb. 1:1.) How did he speak in other ages? Describe possible methods of revelation. What made such "revelations" uncertain? Define natural revelation as suggested in paragraph 5. What natural conclusions follow as to our obligations to truth? Why is revelation through nature insufficient? Why are other "sacred" books insufficient as a final revelation? Give your own views as to the effect on the world of the sudden disappearance of the Bible. Memorize the Summary.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The worth of the Bible to the individual heart; the home; the nation.

Think of the lands of the Bible and those where it is not known.

Consider the boundaries of what we call civilization; then discover how the influence of the Bible defines that boundary.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

There are sixty-six books in the Bible—thirty-nine in the Old Testament, twenty-seven in the New. It is supposed that there are thirty-six writers in the Bible.

Assuming that the Pentateuch was written or compiled in the time of Moses the Bible covers a writing period of sixteen hundred years—from Moses to John.

CHAPTER II.

THE NEED OF A BIBLE.

1. It is only as one tries to imagine a world without a Bible that its necessity and value begin to rise in the mind. The very thought of silencing the voice of the Bible is a shock to a sensitive soul. It was a poor world before the Bible. There was always the cry in the human heart, "O that I knew where I might find him" (Job 23 : 1-10). That deep longing of Job was but the expression of every soul ever born into the world. This is proven by the many ways in which men have sought after God.

2. The problems of life have always been the same. There ever were questions that had to be answered, yet no man could answer them : What is the sum of life? Why should we live at all? Where are we going? The groping through the dark to find light is the pathos of human history. The philosophers of Greece and Rome were only a little in advance of the pagan world, though at times, they came close to divine revelation.

RELIGION IS UNIVERSAL.

3. It is often said that the Bible is the source of religion. A moment's thought will show the mistake of such a statement. There has always been "religion" in the world. It is the one striking evidence that man is more than an

animal. There is only one way in which the world can be interpreted: it must be interpreted morally. The whole make-up of man is moral. He is physical, but the physical passes; he is *moral* (or spiritual), and that never passes. Religion, which is here used interchangeably with morality, explains man's real content, or nature, and forecasts also his future. So the Bible did not create religion any more than botany created flowers, or astronomy brought the stars into being.

4. We know nothing of man's history other than that which associates him with sin. His story, prior to his fall, as given in the Bible, lacks detail. We know man only as a sinner ever seeking in some way to get into right relations with God. From the beginning men began to look up, or about them, to see things the eyes could not behold, to hear voices which only the heart could hear. In want of better revelation they began to make gods. Their gods did not make them religious, nor superstitious. The unuttered longings of their hearts created gods. The inner desires created the outer manifestation. Man dreamed—and then carved his idol. It was the god of his heart before it became the god of his hands. "They that make them shall be like unto them" (Psalm 115 : 8).

There was need of a fuller revelation, a word of God that would be intelligible, and at once answer these longings of the heart. Therefore—the need of a Bible.

LIGHT ON THE PROBLEMS OF LIFE.

5. The problems of life, which have increased in number and complexity as man has emerged from darkness, have always been met by man's creation of external objects, through which to explain these problems. Men have always "objectivized" their religion; that is, they have ever given attention to external expression. From the crude carved idol of the dark-minded heathen to the crucifix in the hands of a modern worshiper, the story of externalized religion has gone on in its telling. It would be interesting to consider this subject of externalizing religion, showing the effects upon us all, at times, but we must not tarry. It is sufficient to know that religion must be primarily a matter of the heart, and that it can only be intelligent and worthful when the inner cry and longing are answered by a Voice from the Being who made us, to whom we are related in a real and vital sense. There is no worthful meaning to life outside of the biblical interpretation of it. As the Bible has gone among men, high ideals have been created, relationships sanctified, and human life dignified, to an extent never before known in the world. The Bible view of life is God's view, and human experience attests its correctness.

A GUIDE TO CONSCIENCE AND WILL.

6. What will guide man's conscience in his relations to others? What will direct his will

toward the best things? What will open his heart to the highest good? What is the highest good? These are age-long questions. There are no answers to these questions except as they come from the Highest Source. There is no way for the answer to reach the universal heart save through an intelligent revelation. As has been stated in the previous chapter, there are revelations through nature, but the world-history shows their inadequacy; there was need of a revelation through a spoken word, expressing the mind of God.

Hence the need of a revelation so distinct and certain as to convince the heart of its genuineness; hence, the need of a Bible. Hence the need of that submissive spiritual posture which the psalmist assumed when he said, "I will hear what God Jehovah will speak" (Psalm 85: 8).

UNFOLDING THE FUTURE.

7. In the further seeking for light on the questions of life and its meanings, men have always speculated as to the future. They have longed to know the outcome of life. We need not discuss immortality here. It is enough to say that since the world began belief in a future life has been inborn in all races—a universal conviction, though sometimes subject to transient personal questioning as when the pious Job queried, "If a man die shall he live again?" (Job 14:14). The darker men's minds the more grotesque and fearful were the notions of the

life beyond. That light on the future was needed has always been evident. It is the crying desire of the human heart.

8. The only satisfactory light ever thrown on the other life has come from the Bible. Some speak as if the Bible created a future, and determined its character as heaven and hell. But the Bible did neither of these, any more than the Bible created God. The Bible did not create the future life: it unfolded it. We may say yet more: When Paul declared that Jesus brought life and immortality (or, incorruption) to light (II Tim. 1: 10), he did not mean that Jesus created either life or immortality, but that he brought them to light! He simply clarified that which before had been dark and obscure.

Hence the need of a Bible—a revelation from God, at once clear and intelligent. Without the Bible we would be in endless confusion as to the future life.

AN INTELLIGENT IDEA OF GOD.

9. The need of a Bible to give an intelligent idea of God is also apparent. As has been said before, men knew there was a power above them, about them. "It is accordant with man's constitution that he should be appealing to an unseen Power, bowing to an unseen Authority, or seeking an invisible fellowship; or, that he should have a religion that combines all these forms of action. Religion is natural to man" (*Clarke*). But this idea was crude, imperfect, oftentimes working out an idea of many gods,

and in no place reaching the grand conception of God as given in the Bible. The Bible is the only book that tells us that God is our Father. The much-boasted teaching of these days called "the Fatherhood of God," is not a new teaching; it is as old as the Bible, and men never dreamed of it until they found it there. The race could not know its Father until the revelation of our real kinship came through the Bible.

THE IDEAL LIFE.

10. The need of the Bible for a proper understanding and development of the ideal life must also be admitted. It would seem as though this were a universally accepted statement, but there is a wide difference of opinion here. Men are saying that the Bible cannot be the final test of religion, nor properly determine the life we should live. It is commonly said that human reason is sufficient, and from the nature of the case must be sufficient. It is said that in this day we are witnessing a transference of historical Christianity to the realm of psychology. By this is meant that we do not so much need a historical Christ as a present Christ, real to the consciousness of each one. It would be easy to argue from this that the Bible must ever be secondary; that the evidence of one's consciousness is above the Bible; that it determines the Bible, or rejects it, according to one's inner light.

11. There are some practical difficulties in this so-called new teaching, which may be understood by the most ordinary mind. It is here

contended that a man's consciousness needs guidance; that without the Bible there is no true religious consciousness. Consciousness can never be the court of final appeal. Religion based on one's own consciousness is likely to be vague, visionary, and fantastic. The religion that is only in one's mind, guided solely by one's own temperament and caprices, without some external guide to inspire it and control it, is not likely to be Christian. It may as easily be Buddhistic, or any of the other "subjective"—meditative—religions which abound in the world today. Transference of historical Christianity to subjective Christianity has resulted in a desiccated Christianity.

12. These words seem high-sounding, yet it is necessary to use them; but they are easily explained. In the argument that we need only a Christ in the heart, and that we need to give less attention to the story of Christ as told in the Bible, we have one of those subtle half-truths, all the more dangerous because it seems so sensible. Yet we contend that there can be no Christ of experience, intelligently apprehended, without the Christ of history. It is true that Christianity is a supernatural religion; it is spiritual and not physical. We shall consider that by and by. But it must also be said that a subjective—that is, an inner—religion must have an objective relation like the Bible, in order to make it intelligent, balanced, sane.

13. We never can produce the character of Jesus without a history of Jesus. There must

be a historical basis on which to build a Christ-like character. The inner consciousness must accord with the historical revelation. It is necessary to have a historical Christianity if a present Christianity is to have any real quality and enduring life.

14. From all this we may safely assume the following: The final authority in matters religious must be a revealed word, a revealed will, a revealed record. Human reason can never be the final authority. Human reason is too capricious. All reasoning is not reason, and we need an authoritative revelation to determine these matters. "Every man his own master with no higher authority than his own caprice," would be anarchy. The government of God demands a revelation of God—and it is natural to suppose that it would be given. There is an insistent demand for it in human history and human nature. It is absolutely necessary.

The revelation is the book we call the Bible.

SUMMARY.

Religion is universal. The human heart makes a God if there is no revealed God. A revelation is needed in order that we may have light on life's problems (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:105); a guide to conscience and direction of will (Jer. 10:23); a voice as to the future (John 14:2); an intelligent conception of God (John 3:16; Matt. 6:9; John 20:17); direction in the ideal life (Psalm 1). Such revela-

tion must of necessity be greater than human reason; it guides one's reason, and brings order out of confusion. Without a Bible human reason would be at sea.

QUIZ.

Memorize the Summary. If possible, also, memorize Job 23:2-10. Why do heathen make idols? What would be the outcome if human reason were the only guide in religion? Does the Bible guide us, according to the statement in the Summary? How?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

How the inner life craves an outer manifestation, an authority.

Man left to himself without revelation a creature of despair.

The Bible the answer to the cry of the human heart.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Memorize the books of the Old Testament. Learn its divisions: The Pentateuch, 5 books; Historical portion, 12 books; Poetical portion, 5 books; Major prophets, 5 books; Minor prophets, 12 books.

CHAPTER III.

THE NATURAL APPROACH TO THE BIBLE.

1. How shall we approach the Bible? That is not so easy to answer as one may think. There are wide differences in the minds of people as to the method of approach. The difference of opinion grows out of temperament and spirit. Much depends upon the purpose of approach. Sometimes "those who come to scoff remain to pray." For what does one go to the Bible? What is the object of his visit? What are his hopes and his aims? Most of the trouble growing out of Bible reading and study has been due, not to the peculiar construction of the Bible, nor to the difficulty of understanding it, but to the motives in the hearts of those who have undertaken its reading and its study.

NOT AS WE APPROACH OTHER BOOKS.

2. There is a suggestion commonly made which many of us do not accept. We are told that one must approach the Bible as he approaches other books. He must separate himself from all preconceived notions, and imagine himself as one never having seen it before. Only in this way can he get an unbiased view of it. This is impossible from the very nature of the case; for only one who never had heard of

the Bible could so approach it. One cannot successfully imagine a condition which has no basis in fact. We might as well say that one must approach his mother and father in the same way that he approaches other people in order to form a correct judgment of them. He *knows* his parents; he may or may not know other people. In the nature of the case he cannot know them as he knows his parents.

3. The Bible is related to us as no other book possibly can be. It stands in a peculiar relation to us from earliest childhood. We cannot approach the Bible as we approach other books—not because of its unique character, necessarily (though there is much to be said on that ground), but because of its history. It stands before us as no other book can ever stand—whether we believe in it or not.

THE WORLD-KNOWLEDGE OF IT.

4. The Bible comes to us attested by years, by its peculiar history, and is inwrought into the lives of nations and individuals. We simply cannot imagine ourselves not to know; we cannot effect such a fanciful self-delusion; the attempt could never work out to any practical issue. It requires only a glance at the history of the world, the civilized world, to see how it has been affected by the Bible. Where the Bible is known it has wrought mightily in the development of men and of nations. As a book—say nothing of its divine or human character—it has made a place of its own throughout Christ-

endom and, unlike the Koran among Mohammedans, and the Confucian classics among the Chinese, it cannot be viewed simply as literature.

5. One who approaches the Bible is confronted by a certain consensus of world-opinion as to its character; he knows considerable of its movement in the experiences of men; and last, though not least, he has some knowledge of its effect on his own inner self, even though he has been a wanderer from the paths of righteousness. He bears a relation to the Bible such as he sustains to no other book. He may throw aside Shakespeare, Bacon, Emerson; he may refuse to look into the poets, essayists and philosophers—all without moral damage to himself. But he cannot shake off the consciousness that he stands in an entirely different relation to the Bible; he cannot throw *that* aside without in some way affecting his moral character. We may call this the result of early training, or explain it on other grounds; but the truth is that these things hinder a man's approaching the Bible as he does Macaulay or Tennyson or Motley. There are evidences that the simple reading of the Bible by those who had never come in contact with it, has mightily affected them in ways other books have not.

6. There are, of course, questions about the Bible which are open to ordinary literary investigation and criticism. Dates, historical statements, authorship, literary construction, etc., these are to be considered as ~~similar~~ ma-

terial in other books is considered. But when men are confused or differ in matters of faith or morals, the final and decisive word is spoken by the Bible.

What, then, is the natural approach to the Bible? What are the qualities of mind likely to make the approach to the Bible worthwhile?

A DESIRE FOR THE BEST.

7. Standing out clear and distinct is the generally accepted belief that the Bible stands for that which is best and purest in human life. Assuming this, the first qualification in a right and natural approach to the Bible is a love for purity, for the best things. In other words, we must have a desire to know what the Bible reveals. He who approaches the Bible in a sceptical, critical, unbelieving spirit is likely to discover a closed book. The letter is there, but the spirit has departed. A man wandering in the woods at night may find the road, but the chances are that he will lose himself in the thicket. He comes in contact with strange things. He comes out—somewhere, but his impressions are likely to be those of a nightmare. He needs two things: he needs a light, and he needs a road. Given the light he finds the road. So, if a man goes into the Bible, and "goes it blind," he is likely to come onto strange things, and he will be dissatisfied with many things.

THE NEED OF HEART SYMPATHY.

8. Whatever may be said as to the narrowness

of this view, and a "begging" of the whole question, it is nevertheless the natural experience in every other department of life. Let us see how it works.

9. Nature speaks intelligibly only to a nature-lover. He must have the spirit of nature who would hear the voice of nature. A landscape may be only a pasture to one man; it may be a spreading sea of glory to another man. One man stands in the art gallery, gazing at some noble masterpiece, and becomes a willing slave, "chained to the chariot of triumphal art." He has entered the world of art, a kindred spirit, ■ gracious patron, a lover of art. Close beside him stands the "Jew who is ready to scrape a picture by Titian so as to have a clean piece of canvas that is good for something."

10. So, in like manner, he who would understand the Bible, and be led into its fields of gold, must bring to it a heart of sympathy, a willingness to be led into the truth of God. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. The natural man knows nothing of the things of God. (Consider I Cor. 2 : 6-16.)

A REVERENT SPIRIT.

11. Since it is the evident purpose of the Bible to minister to righteousness, to make one better, the importance of a reverent approach to it is more and more self-evident. Much perversion has grown out of a lack of proper reverence for the Bible on the part of many people. There are many who ridicule the Bible, who have

caught a few phrases here and there, and then try to throw aspersion upon the whole book. They ridicule those who do love it, and who do read it. Aside from the fact that such ridicule is an evidence of crass ignorance, such persons can never come to a sensible knowledge of the Bible, for they approach it in a wrong way. For one to ridicule the Bible, to belittle it in any way whatever, is to show ignorance of world-movements, an utter misunderstanding of the forces which have gone into the making of civilization.

DESIRE FOR GUIDANCE.

12. There must also be a desire for guidance on life's pathway. He who approaches the Bible in this mood will find an open portal, inviting to a highway brightened by the glory of God which will be as a lamp to his feet, and a light that shines more and more as he walks thereby (Prov. 4 : 18). No one has yet gone to the Bible, asking what he must do to find life, what he must do to be guided into all truth, but has found a large and complete answer.

THE SUPREME OBJECT.

13. It may be said in reply, that the Bible teaches other things than moral and spiritual truths, and that these things can be understood just as other history is understood. All of which is partially true—yet only partially, for it must be evident that the Bible has been created to teach but one great truth: identi-

fying God with the universe, bringing man into harmony with the Being who made him. Around this great truth or purpose of the Bible other records group themselves as scaffolding around a building. This view of the Bible gives honor and dignity to the work done upon it, and shows a proper regard for the being and destiny of man.

14. Here, then, is the matter in concise form. The natural approach to the Bible will be determined by an honest heart, a pure heart, a desiring heart, an open heart. These heart-attitudes, coupled with a patient mind, a willingness to lay aside superstitious notions about the Bible, and foolish uses to which it has often been put by ignorant zealots, will make the Bible a new book to a great many.

A WORD OF CAUTION.

15. It may be well, in concluding this study, to caution the reader against a spirit of dogmatism which is as foolish in an earnest disciple of Christ as is an irreverent attitude on the part of an unbeliever. There are opinions about the Bible which have been inherited, which are nothing more than traditional beliefs. One can be as foolishly ignorant as another can be shamefully irreverent. We do not worship a book; we worship the God revealed in the book. A true approach to the Bible will be evidenced by a desire to get the full sweep of its teachings, and not by the selection of haphazard sections to prove points in an argument. The Bible is

a bigger book than a concordance, and it has a higher use than an arsenal.

16. We should also remember that the Bible is not responsible for the opinions which men have sometimes held concerning it. Too many things are read into the Bible. So both the believer and the unbeliever have many things to learn. May we be guided into the truth!

17. Here is the Bible, coming to us from a hoary past, kept, guarded, upheld by other hands than ours. It gave its gracious message to our pious fathers as it had spoken to their fathers before them; it helped shape their characters to finest rectitude; it was the monitor of their family life; it inspired their Anglo-Saxon struggles toward liberty, became the cornerstone of their civil governments, and breathed itself into their laws; it was their comfort in affliction, their light in darkness, the basis of their hope for time and for eternity. Now and then we turn to other books and think we have found precious truth. But we return to the Bible. Moses and David and Isaiah and John and Paul calmly wait while we are drinking at other fountains, and welcome us back to the Book of books. We seek it as the thirsting seek for streams in the desert, and lo, we drink of the river that gladdens the city of God. (Ps. 46 : 4.)

SUMMARY.

The Bible cannot be approached as we approach other books, because of its character, its history, and its unique influence on the

world. The Bible has a message for those who come to it with a love for righteousness (Psalm 84: 11); who possess a reverent spirit (Psalm 25: 14); who desire a guide (John 16: 13; Romans 15: 4). The supreme object of the Bible is to reveal God, and restore man to harmony with him through Jesus Christ. (Consider John 20: 31.)

QUIZ.

How are we told to approach the Bible? Why is it not possible to follow this advice? What is the difference between the Bible and other books? In what spirit should we take up the Bible? Give the meaning of Paul in 1 Cor. 2: 6-16. What does the Psalmist say concerning the upright in heart? What state of heart will bring the secret of Jehovah? What is the supreme object of the Bible? Memorize the Summary.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

That which paints the landscape, hears the music, sees the vision, is—what?

Consider the worth of soul-culture.

Why do we not see the glory in the things of God?

“Earth’s crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God,
Only he who sees takes off his shoes,
The rest sit round and pick blackberries.”

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Review previous lessons. Memorize the books of the New Testament.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BIBLE AND OTHER RELIGIOUS BOOKS.

A UNIVERSAL BODY OF TRUTH.

There is a body of universal truth, clearly written across the life of the world, which is the possession of all people, without regard to race or time. This body of truth may be stated as the universal law of right and wrong, of justice and injustice, of hate and love. This body of truth may also be stated as more or less a revelation of God to men, for he has never left himself without witness, so that in a real sense the world is without excuse, up to the measure of light given to it. (Rom. 1: 20.) The Africans on the Congo declared they knew the "commandments," but how, or whence they came, they knew not.

THERE ARE OTHER SACRED BOOKS.

1. The Bible is not the only religious book in the world. Before the Bible there were sacred writings which more or less influenced the life of the people.

It is natural that this body of truth should imperfectly find its way into literature. Thus our Bible is not the only book that is accepted as a religious standard. Before the Bible was completed, and afterward, too, there have been sacred writings which more or less influenced

the lives of men. So we have the sacred books of the orient, the philosophies of Greece, and Rome, and the ethical or moral teachings of the wise men of pre-Bible days. As stated in a former chapter, these were the longings of the human heart reaching out after the best that is in man, with a hope also of finding God. "To an unknown god," was the inscription on an altar in ancient Athens, from which Paul attempted to lead the people to the known God—as revealed in Jesus Christ. (See Acts 17 : 16-34.)

THE BIBLE MINIMIZED.

2. It is sometimes said that our Bible is but one of many Bibles in the world; that it has much in common with these other great books; that much of the Bible's ethical teaching is found in other books that existed long before the Bible; hence the conclusion that the Bible is made up of many of the teachings of these religious books. So great has been the emphasis on this view, that the Bible has been minimized while the older books have been magnified. It is even pointed out that some Bible stories, such as the creation and the flood and the virgin birth of Christ, are found in these old writings. We may be able to take up this particular phase of the subject later, but our immediate purpose is simply to contrast the Bible with these other "scriptures," for which so much has been claimed. There are many religious books or "scriptures" aside

from the Bible. Some of these have come out of the hoary past. It is only in later years that men have been able to get at them with any degree of intelligence and understanding. The naming of these systems will be sufficient for our purpose: Zoroastrianism with its Zendavesta; Brahmanism with its Vedas; Buddhism with its Shasters; Mohammedanism with its Koran.

CONCERNING OTHER "SCRIPTURES."

3. In all of these "scriptures," as has been said before, there is much that is valuable. But when we contrast them with the Bible, there is not only a striking contrast, but there is at once evident the singular and unique position which the Bible assumes. In answer to the oft-repeated statement that these oriental "scriptures" are worthy of comparison with the Bible, and in some sense lessen its value as religious authority, it is enough to quote the words of Prof. Max Muller, the distinguished scholar who opened the doors of these oriental "scriptures" to the world. They are a rebuke to the boasted assumptions of those who cannot rank with the great man who brought these sacred books to light:

"I confess it has been for many years a problem to me, aye, and to a great extent is so still, how the Sacred Books of the East should, by the side of so much that is fresh, natural, simple, beautiful and true, contain so much that is not only unmeaning, artificial, and silly, but

even hideous and repellent." Again he says: "These works deserve to be studied as the physician studies the twaddle of idiots and the ravings of madmen. They will disclose to a thoughtful eye the ruins of faded grandeur, the memories of noble aspirations. But let us try to translate these works into our own language, and we shall feel astonished that human language and human thought should ever have been used for such purposes." (These quotations are taken from "*The Bible, Its Origin and Nature*," by Marcus Dodds.) Dr. Dodds adds this: "It would indeed be difficult to name any books which more seriously try the patience of the reader. We may doggedly plough through them to gain some insight into the state of mind of those who once found or still find in them their highest teaching, but no one who has been brought up in Christian ideas and modern thought need expect to find in them religious stimulus or useful knowledge."

4. There is also a quotation in one of Joseph Cook's lectures, which is worth reproducing in this connection. It is taken from a comparison of the Scriptures with other "scriptures" by Professor Monier Williams:

"When I began investigating Hindooism and Buddhism, I found many beautiful gems; nay, I met with bright coruscations of true light flashing here and there, amidst the surrounding darkness. As I prosecuted my researches into these non-Christian systems, I

began to foster a fancy that they had been unjustly treated. I began to observe and trace out curious coincidences and comparisons with our own sacred book of the east. I began, in short, to be a believer in what is called the evolution and growth of religious thought. 'These imperfect systems,' I said to myself, 'are interesting efforts of the human mind struggling upwards towards Christianity. Nay, it is probable, that they are all intended to lead up to the one true religion, in that Christianity is, after all, merely the climax, the complement, the fulfilment of them all.' "

"Now there is a delightful fascination about such a theory, and, what is more, there are really elements of truth in it. But I am glad of this opportunity of stating publicly that I am persuaded that I was misled by its attractiveness, and that its main idea is quite erroneous. We welcome these books. We ask every missionary to study their contents, and thankfully lay hold of whatsoever things are true and of good report in them. But we warn him that there can be no greater mistake than to force these non-Christian bibles into conformity with some scientific theory of development, and then point to the Christian Holy Bible as the crowning product of religious evolution. So far from this, these non-Christian bibles are all developments in the wrong direction. They all begin with some flashes of true light, and end in utter darkness. Pile them, if you will, on the left

side of your study table, but place your own Holy Bible on the right side—all by itself, all alone—and with a wide gap between."

HUMAN SYSTEMS—NOT REVELATIONS.

5. Through some of these writings there breathes an ethical spirit—a spirit that seeks better moral conditions and a better social system. But at the point where the Bible begins, these systems of philosophy and ethical teachings fail, and fail so utterly that the gap between them and the Bible is practically unbridged. For the great and fundamental difficulty is—that in the Bible we reach ethics, or morality, through God, and in the eastern philosophies there is the effort to reach God through ethics, and the human philosophy finds neither God nor a pure moral life.

6. Perhaps we shall understand this position better if we put it this way: There is a profound difference between a religious system and a revelation. The Bible stands out distinctly with this dominant purpose,—to reveal something. It is history only so far as that history ministers to the intended revelation. This is the unique position of the Bible. It is a revelation; a continuous revelation; a progressive revelation; with a wonderful climax to that revelation. Through many types and shadows, through lattice-work and thin veiling, we move steadily in the Bible until we are led to the Real, the Permanent, the One to come, till we "see the Christ stand."

All good in other books is here found; for universal morality is here in its clearest and most commanding form. And what other books fail to give to men is here in all its glory—the revelation of God, and the full unfolding in Jesus Christ.

7. There is no such movement in other sacred books. There is nothing like the Bible in any of them. No one would think of calling them a Revelation. They are a jumbled mass of sayings, moving toward confusion rather than toward coherence. They have no story to tell, no hope to extend, no faith to impart. In short they are the wild sayings of fatalists who had no hope but of eternal sensuality as the Paradise of the Mohammedans, or extinction of individuality as the Nirvana of Buddhism. But the Bible moves toward the dawn: it is God's word, speaking to men in their own language.

ZOROASTER.

8. In a general way we may express these differences yet further. Zoroaster lived and taught about one thousand years before Christ. His system was better than those who followed him in later centuries, who, with him, still have a remarkable influence on the world. He believed in a personal deity, but accepted more than one deity. There was no thought of filial relationship in God, and no motive of love as an incentive toward higher life. Fire was also worshiped. But after three thousand years western Asia is lower in civilization than when Zoroastrianism began its influence.

INDIAN PHILOSOPHIES.

9. The great philosophies of India, as expressed in Brahmanism and Buddhism, are striking in their failure at the very point where the Bible achieves its great victory—viz., in *life-expression*. Suppression is the law of Buddhism; expression is the great teaching of the Bible. The Bible calls for self-denial, it is true, but not the self-denial that leads to extinction, but to a larger life. The gospel of the Bible is a universal yea; the gospel of Indian philosophy is an eternal nay. The gospel of the Bible is the gospel of affirmation; “I know,” says the Apostle Paul (II Timothy 1:12); the gospel of the oriental philosophy is negation—we know nothing, therefore let us go on to nothing.

CONFUCIANISM.

10. Confucianism is not so much a book of religion as it is a code of laws. Its effect on China is remarkable, and has produced a great people, whose chief characteristic is their disregard for human life, and the utter extinction of immortal hope. Where the ethics of Confucius touch the great question of life and its outcome it reaches the Buddhistic philosophy in the hope that by and by we shall utterly cease to be. Hence the Chinese nation as we see it. These systems lack deep and abiding morality because they lack life. Only God in our ethics can produce ideal characters.

MOHAMMEDANISM.

11. Mohammedanism may be considered separately. It may be that Mohammed began his religious life with a sincere purpose. His cry, "There is no God but God," was sorely needed. But his Koran lacks sanity and the great heart of the Bible--love. The motive of the Koran is--the sword is the best missionary. But the fruit of the Koran is its own condemnation. "The Koran has frozen Mohammedan thought; to obey it is to abandon progress." It has created the most bloodthirsty people in history. Its civilization is of the lowest order; its government the vilest of the vile. The nations of the earth are the self-constituted policemen of Mohammedanism, and the Sultan is called the Sick Man of the East.

12. It should be said also that these sacred books have produced no real moral character, no social ideals toward which to move--though the founders of these systems earnestly sought to create them. There is to-day no true story told of the moral life of the Buddhists. No traveler dare tell in public, nor write for public eyes, the story of the moral systems as they are in vogue even to this day in these lands.

13. Many beautiful things have been said of the *essence* of religious truth in all these systems; that in our dealings with these peoples we should reach them on the common ground of their own religion. There is some force in these pleadings; we should always seek the point of contact and not the point of difference with those

whom we would help. Yet we must not be blinded by the glamour of a beautiful philosophy under which is coiled the snake of a bad system that often denies immortality and makes licentiousness the altar of religious worship.

14. It is notable, also, that when sects have been organized around some mistakenly interpreted passages in the Bible they have found it necessary to "discover" other sacred writings, such as the fraud of the Book of Mormon, the most consummate and bold fraud in modern history.

THEY HAVE NO MESSAGE—NO SAVIOUR.

15. We must remember, too, that a careful study of these oriental religions reveals a lack so great that they are scarcely worth quoting in the same class with the Bible. Not only do they fail in life-expression, in a revelation of God, but they know nothing of salvation, they have no way of escape from sin. They have "good" men, wise men, they have men whom they revere, but we search in vain for the voice of Him who cried to a weary world, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." They have no Saviour of the world!

16. It is not the conclusion of a natural desire, nor the outcome of blinded prejudice, nor the refusal or inability to weigh evidence, that brings us to this position of the Bible as different from all other religious books, and as great as it is different. Nor is the result the outcome of

false reasoning. These things can be seen of all men; they can be known of all men. The voice of the Master is clear and insistent as we stand and look at the scriptures of the world. "By their fruits ye shall know them." And the Bible rises, for it is not a philosophy, nor a system of ethics—but a *revelation*, a revelation of God!

SUMMARY.

There are other sacred books in the world, revealing the religious life of the people. Containing much that is worthwhile, they fail because they are not revelations from God. They are not to be compared to the Bible. There is a purpose in the Bible leading toward Christ; there is no purpose or movement in other sacred books. The Bible preaches the gospel of affirmation—"I know;" the other books declare the hopeless message of negation—"We do not know." God speaks in the Bible; his voice is lost in other ancient scriptures. The fruit of the Bible is the vindication of its claims. It reveals a Saviour for the world.

QUIZ.

Why should there be other sacred books in the world? Define the difference between the Bible and these sacred books. How does the Bible vindicate the claim to be a revelation? What is the great message of the Bible? What is the message of other sacred books? Why do these "systems" fail? Define the purpose of the Bible—what is the hope held out?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

Read Mrs. Caroline Atwater Mason's, "The Little Green God."

Have brief three-minute papers on the "religions" mentioned in this chapter. Encyclopedias will furnish facts.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Repeat books of Old Testament.

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and Aramaic. The New Testament in Greek and Aramaic. Aramaic was a language akin to the Hebrew.

CHAPTER V.

THE WRITERS.

1. We are coming upon some difficult questions. We are entering the battle ground where giants have fought for years, and the end is not yet. It is a tribute to its worth that the Bible has stood so much "battle." It is a wonder that a shred of it is left. Every statement has been brought into question. Every foot of ground it covers has been bitterly fought. There have been combatants on both sides who have often missed the spirit of the Book in their zeal for and against it. Where shall we take our stand?

2. We are saved from some of the controversy at the outset by the fact that we are Christians, seeking to know the will of God, if it has been revealed. Let us approach the matter in a calm spirit. We **may** not agree; but we **will not** quarrel. There is room for many opinions—if we are intent on knowing the truth.

WHO WROTE THE BIBLE?

3. The Bible did not come to us exactly as other books have come. It was not delivered to us in the fine bindings, beautiful print, linen paper, so common in these days. The Bible was a growth. It is more than a book; it is a series of books written at different times, under differing circumstances, by writers remote from each other in time. Not one of them dreamed that

he was making a contribution to a great book which should live to the end of time! Each writer had a message for his day and people, with an outlook toward a consummation so great and glorious that the writings, as a whole, are charged with a hopeful spirit, under varying conditions of distress and disaster. The darker the night the brighter the light. Each writer seems to have caught a spirit, seen a vision, which anticipated the coming of a Kingdom that should cover all other kingdoms, and evil should be done away, and the God of heaven be the God of all.

NOT WRITTEN BY ONE MAN.

4. The Bible was not written by one man. It was not planned as an ordinary book, permitting its author to go back over his work repeatedly, correcting this and that statement, seeking to give a unity to it. It was not planned by any man. Its plan was hidden away in the purposes and councils of Another, beyond and above all human wisdom. This is all the more evident when we consider matters somewhat in detail.

WRITTEN BY NORMAL MEN.

5. The writers were normal men. They lived among the people, coming in close contact with the movements of their time. Their business was not that of authors or editors, as we understand these offices. They wrote under impulses which were created by the Spirit of God and the times in which they lived, under incen-

tives which came to them from human needs, guided to an interpretation of the outcome of these events often beyond their own natural perceptions. While the phrase "normal men" is used here it must not be understood as meaning "common." Some of the writers were really extraordinary men. Isaiah, Ezekiel, Nehemiah and others, were men of genius and insight; while those who wrote or compiled the Psalms, Job, etc., were literary geniuses of the first rank. God always uses the best instruments at hand. The Bible expresses the mind of God through human experience, and brings into view that which is clearly beyond the human—the divine answer to the human cry.

THE MAIN PURPOSE.

6. The main purpose of the writers of the Bible ever seemed to be to impart to the people the mind of God. Those whom we know, were men of deep sympathy with men, and in close touch with the unseen—with God. Not all of them realized the full import of their work—but they sought to minister to the spiritual needs of the people, declaring that they were speaking for Another. We shall consider this important phase in a later chapter. Whatever we may call it, the writers of the Bible were wiser than they knew, because they were not left to their own discretion. The credentials of the Bible are spiritual. Unless there is a divine attesting there is no Bible.

BEYOND HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

7. The writers of the Bible speak of matters outside the realm of human experience. While morals are discussed in many other "sacred" books, as we have seen in a former chapter, there is a tone and message in the Bible superior to all these. The bringing of God among his people, the sense of his presence, the hitherto unknown experience of pardon, the promise of "grace," the assurance of moral victory—the men who wrote these things were in touch with another Spirit than that of man, and there was nothing in the spirit of the times in which they lived to inspire such messages. (Consider these Scriptures: Psalm 32:1, 2; 103:13; Luke 19:10; II Corinthians 12:19.)

In this connection we may read the words of Dr. Sanday, from whom the Scripture citations above are taken: "These are thoughts that move in a new direction. They are something more than the formulated teaching of experience, 'the harvest of a quiet eye' brooding on the lessons which life has brought. They tell of an experience not easily reached, nay, such as could not be reached at all except by ways of which the world knows nothing" (*The Oracles of God*, page 39).

THEIR IDEAS OF GOD.

8. The writers of the Bible assumed that there is a Supreme Being (Psalm 14:1). They assumed that this Being was intelligent and benevolent. The goodness of God, the justice of God,

the righteousness of God, are assumed (Gen. 18: 25). They also assumed the possibility of communion with God (Isa. 57: 15). This is manifested in varying degrees by various writers. God is among his people. He is judging the hearts of men. This spiritual quality in the writers is evident all through the Bible. The more sensitized the spirit of the writer, the more evident is this spiritual character of the message. This is an experience entirely natural. The work to be done naturally determined the spirit in which it was accomplished.

WHO WERE THE WRITERS?

9. It is not possible for us to discuss the question as to who the writers were. That is a matter we cannot settle. Yet we may in a general way look at the subject. In the time of Christ Moses was doubtless regarded as the author of the Pentateuch. David was looked upon as peculiarly related to the Psalms, while "Isaiah" was freely quoted. It is not needful that we discuss the many phases of the problem, but in the main we can consider some things which will guide us to an intelligent position. It is to be noted that we are not discussing material, but the men who wrote the books in the Bible.

10. As to Moses. It is reasonable to assume that, being the liberator of the Jewish people, practically the founder of a new nation grounded in the principles of righteousness as unfolded in the Pentateuch,—it is reasonable to assume that Moses should conceive it to be a part of his duty

to make some record of those events, and of the great work he was called to do.

11. He was peculiarly fitted for such work. He was trained in the wisdom of Egypt. There was, to begin with, a great literature with which he was familiar. The wealth of antecedent literatures was his. He knew the legends as well as the history. Scholar that he was, coupled with the spirit of loyalty to Jehovah, he was enabled to take what was genuine and discard the false and fanciful. It is evident that he told the truth, for his story not only shows the wickedness and sin of the people, but his own shortcomings as well; there is an apparent desire to tell the truth, to express the mind of God without color or bias.

But more than this: Moses clearly declared that the word of the Lord came to him (see various passages in Deuteronomy). God spoke to Moses, and what God said Moses wrote.

THE PSALMS.

12. It is impossible to do more than simply refer to the general view that is held concerning the authorship of various books. We should note, however, that while we frequently speak of the Psalms of David we do not thereby imply that he was the author of all of them. That he wrote many of them seems to be beyond question. But there were other "psalmists," those who sang "in the Spirit," whose works were naturally added to the psalter long after the times of David.

ISAIAH.

13. Nor can we say much concerning Isaiah. Whatever view we may hold as to one writer or several, we can easily see that neither view has anything to do with the divine character of the books, the truthfulness of its contents, and the spirit of its teachings. The outlook of Isaiah is the most marvelous thing in literature, and its foregleams of the Messiah are thrilling when we look at the literalness with which they have been fulfilled. Consider the so-called Messianic element in Isaiah, as found in chapters 32:1; Isaiah 40; 7:14; 9:6, 7; Isaiah 53. These are necessarily but fragments; but we may say that the one who wrote these things was guided by a wisdom more than human.

COMPOSITE AUTHORSHIP.

14. Nor can we discuss so-called "composite" authorship. This is outside of our province, save as the merest suggestion serves us in passing. The fact that there are variations in style in different parts of the same book, or that there is similar material in other ancient writings, in no sense invalidates authorship if the ordinary rules of authorship are admitted. There may have been, and doubtless were, later hands on Moses' work; there may be several writers of Isaiah—these things have no influence on the great outstanding fact that the writers of the Bible were honest men, seeking to express great truths for the uplifting of the people, all of them working toward that great event which was to

come. In no place in the Bible has the thought of "finality" been in the minds of the writers. Whether there were one or a dozen writers of a single book, neither the titles nor dates have anything to do with the truth expressed, or the divine character of the utterances; and those who finally brought the book or books together were as divinely guided and controlled, or inspired, as he who wrote a part or whole. History seems to indicate such divine guidance. This may be accepted without violation to any view—it is certainly sensible and reasonable.

NOT MERE COLLECTORS.

15. The writers of the Bible, even if they were sometimes compilers, as of necessity they must have been, were not mere collectors of material. There is much difference between the influence which quotations have on a writer and the influence which guided the writer in the use of materials. It will not do to charge the writers of the Bible with indiscriminate use of material, without regard to fact or fiction. The great unfolding of the Bible, its movement from the beginning to its consummation in Christ, should be sufficient answer to such a charge. The writers were not influenced so much by the history and legend and folklore which they found, but they took what was of pedagogic and moral worth in them, and worked their material into the literary form that God intended the truths to bear—all leading up to the great consummation. The purpose, development, and un-

folding of the great ideal which led to the Christ, were in the hands of men whose lives were controlled and whose minds were guided by the Spirit of God.

THE BIBLE OPINION.

16. We cannot stop here. There are clearer statements in the Bible, indicating the character of these writers. They are called holy men, who spoke under divine direction (II Peter 1: 19-21). We shall carry this teaching into the two following chapters. But as we are considering the writers we should bear in mind the work they did. No honest man would say that God spoke to him if his whole being did not attest the fact. And here we must use the argument which is not accepted by all: The *fruit* is the true evidence, after all. Through the Bible the "one increasing purpose runs," and it finds itself rising to the heights in Christ. It is worth noting that the Old Testament writers all point to the One who is to come, while the New Testament writers all look backward to Him who did come. And toward Him today the world is looking. Back to Christ is the cry of modern prophets, and a good cry when rightly interpreted. The writers of the Bible did their work well; and it has stood the battle of the centuries, for it is not their word, but the word of the living God.

OUR DEBT TO SCHOLARSHIP.

17. We can never pay the debt we owe to the

scholarship of the world for giving us the Bible in its present shape. The writers did their work and passed away. It has been a mighty task to gather this work together and give us the Bible. Now and then we hear slighting remarks about scholarship, saying that we do not need it to understand the Bible. But we could not have a Bible without scholarship. The Book wasn't written in English. It was hidden away in the most difficult languages, produced under the most untoward circumstances, requiring slow, painstaking effort, coupled with the rarest ability, to give to us this marvelous production. We owe a large debt of gratitude to scholars and critics of all schools—they have wrought together mightily, even the attacks upon it helping in its final vindication.

SUMMARY.

The Bible did not come to us as other books have come. There were many writers, each one speaking to his time, often with a message pointing to a larger kingdom. They were normal men, living close to God, presenting messages as coming from him. Their aims were moral and spiritual—revealing truths never before known. They assumed the existence of God and the possibility of communion with him. Moses was naturally fitted for the work assigned to him; there were a number of psalmists; Isaiah demands a guiding hand. Composite authorship does not affect divine guidance. The writers of the Bible are called holy men, and their work attests their character.

QUIZ.

How does the Bible differ from other books in the matter of authorship? Define the difference between the Bible and an ordinary book. What seems to be the purpose in the mind of the writers of the Bible? How was the Bible apparently planned? What new teaching is found in the Bible? What did the writers assume? What were Moses' qualifications as a writer? Give a few passages in Deuteronomy where God spake to Moses. What is the striking hope in Isaiah? Why does composite authorship not affect the fact of revelation? What is the Bible opinion of the writers? What has scholarship done for us?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

Consider the Scripture most valuable to you—and state why.

The character of a writer through whom a divine message would naturally come.

The difference between moral and spiritual revelations. Illustrated by a contrast between the Proverbs and the gospel of John.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY.—CLASS DRILL.

Repeat books of the Bible.

The word "Bible" is from the Greek "Biblia," which means books. Through the Latin, with certain changes, the word comes to us as a singular noun. It is said that Chrysostom first applied the term to the sixty-six books in the fourth century. The title "The Bible," first appears in English in Coverdale's Translation.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HUMAN ELEMENTS.

1. There are human elements in the Bible. It was written by men like ourselves. Whatever influence guided them, it did not take from them their human nature, nor do away with their personal feelings, or their mental traits. One easily becomes familiar with the spirit and style of some of the writers. The human element is natural, for without it the Bible would have no voice for us. Paul has his tone, his style, his own spirit. Who that knows this New Testament can mistake John? Isaiah has his own joyous hopefulness, the spirit of a man who has seen something, caught a vision of the future, and the things that were to be; he has a method and style all his own. And the varying moods of the Psalmists—how their human hearts are seen through the lattice of their songs.

SOME NATURAL SOURCES.

2. Let us look at the preparation of the books in a natural way. We have already discussed the differences between the Bible and other sacred books (chapter 4), so we need not discuss that theme here. Suppose the biblical account of creation and the fall of man is found, more or less clearly, in ancient documents, why should that cause us uneasiness or reduce our confidence in our Bible? Do these accounts invalidate the

Bible? Let us lay aside all questions of dates and let us see how the matter would naturally stand.

3. It is reasonable to suppose that the people living before the age of Moses should have had the great truths of creation, etc., in one form or another. To suppose that the facts given in Genesis concerning the creation, etc., were first given as late as the time of Moses, is to do violence to all the probabilities in the case; it assumes that men were left in ignorance as to their origin and antecedents for at least 2,500 years from the starting point of the race. The people must have known something of these things, else youth must have been devoid of curiosity, and age of memory. Traditions must have been handed down from generation to generation, possibly with the facts somewhat awry, with additions and errors, for tradition usually grows as it goes, yet having a core of truth as a common stock of knowledge. It is not difficult to believe that the inspired Moses brought these elements into right relations, cut out the errors, and rescued the original structure from its accretions.

4. This is what happened in the making of Genesis. However crude and misshapen the traditions, the folk-lore, the documents, may have been, the story written by Moses is true and even the setting of it is divine. In answer to the question as to how the fact of revelation can be maintained in the face of other documents, the French scholar, Lenormant, says:

"I shall perhaps be asked, Where then do you find the divine inspiration of the writers who made this archaeology—that supernatural help by which, as a Christian, you must believe them to have been guided? Where? In the absolutely new spirit which animates their narration, even though the form of it may have remained in almost every respect the same as among the neighboring nations. . . . The exuberant polytheism which encumbers these stories has been carefully eliminated, to give place to the severest monotheism. . . . The essential features of the form of tradition have been preserved, and yet between the Bible and the sacred books of Chaldea there is all the distance of one of the most tremendous revolutions which have ever been effected in human beliefs. Herein consists the miracle, and it is none the less amazing for being transposed." (*Beginnings of History*, Preface, p. xvi.)

THE HUMAN ELEMENT STRENGTHENS REVEL-

ATION.

5. It is not, therefore, the human element in the Bible which operates against its being a divine revelation. On the contrary, it may add to the strength of that revelation by reason of the entirely new use to which such old material was put, and the new spirit which animated it.

6. God has ever been speaking to men. He has been compelled by his own nature to speak to them in various forms. Fallen into sin,

sunken in degradation, he yet followed them, and there was much truth hidden in their traditions. But when the supreme revelation was to be made, and God would teach the world his real relation to it, and man's relation to him, he sent his servant to gather the straight truth out of the twisted materials men held, and a new note sang itself into human lives—"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

THE ACCEPTED AUTHORS "DID WRITE."

7. So whatever "final form" the Pentateuch took, even later than the time of Moses, it is yet true that Moses did write. There may have been other helpers, the human element is there, but the divine use of that element is as clear as noonday.

8. Those fragmentary truths which were but dimly seen in other "religions" were brought out into light in the Bible, and the light grows brighter and still more bright until it falls in fullest radiance upon the person of Jesus Christ, who is the sum and completion of all revelation.

WORLD-KNOWLEDGE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

9. It must also be borne in mind that the Bible documents—now known as the Old Testament, were known among many peoples long before Christ came. The "hope of Israel" became a universal hope—and the light that was to shine in the east was awaited by the pagan and the Jewish world. What wonder that some of these prophecies became expectations outside of

Judaism, leading even heathen philosophers to speculate upon the Virgin and the Child long before the Child was born in Bethlehem. These facts do not minimize the force of the Bible story. By contrasting the Scripture narrative with those ancient inventions it is not difficult to discover which is fact and which is fancy.

DEVELOPMENT—NO CHANGES.

10. Unquestionably there is development and progress in the Bible. The truth is revealed as man is open to receive it. Yet we must be careful not to be confused at this point. The Bible is consistent with itself. There is development in the mode of expressing truth and in the measure of truth expressed, but there is no development of truth, no progress in the divine ideal. The human element in the Bible is the clothing but it never obscures the great truths which are intended to be revealed. For instance, the fundamental principles propounded in Genesis, at the very beginning, are eternal. Man is ever brought back to them; he reaches his best estate when he returns to the fundamental principles established in the beginning—a recognition of God, and the dignity of humanity made in the divine image—two things that furnish the impulse for all substantial progress today.

OTHER Books QUOTED.

11. There are other evidences of the human element in the Scriptures. Some of the writers earlier and later referred to books that are not

found in the Bible. This is but natural. Other writers than the biblical attempted to make history. And in the Chronicles, here and there, such references are made, sometimes indicating that these writers were authority for the statements made.* All this shows sensible human elements, which in no measure detracts from the value of the Bible as a revelation. One may be guided in the use of material, as he may be in the matter of original composition.

THE HUMAN ELEMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

12. It is sometimes said that it is difficult to make an exact story of the life of Jesus out of the various gospels. We have sometimes had difficulty in making a harmony. Every attempt at making a "harmony" of the gospels leaves much to be desired. Now it may be that there is no necessity of making a harmony—if we recognize the human elements in the gospels. Certainly there would be no need of four gospels if each one told the same story. It

*Here is a list of references in the Bible to other books:
The Book of the Wars of the Lord—Num. 21:14.
The Book of Jasher—Josh. 10:13; II Sam. 1:18.
The Manner of the Kingdom—I Sam. 10:25.
The Specifications of the Temple—I. Chron. 28:19.
The History of Nathan—I Chron. 29:29; II Chron. 9:29.
The Prophecy of Ahijah—II Chron. 11:29.
The Visions of Iddo the Seer—II Chron. 9:2, 9.
The Commentary of Iddo the Prophet—II Chron. 13:22.
The History of Jehu—II Chron. 20:34.
The History of Hozai—II Chron. 33:19.
Many Narratives—Luke 1:1.
A Former Epistle to the Corinthians—I Cor. 5:9.
The Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans—Col. 4:16.
A Former Epistle of Jude—Jude 3.

would be needless repetition. But is it not true that the human element in all of them adds to their interest and their value?

13. Suppose we regard them as "briefs" or arguments, intended to teach certain forms of truth. Truth no less divine, truth no less God-imparted, because it has been filtered through the human heart of such writers as we have in the New Testament.

14. *Matthew* desires—so it would seem—to convince the Jewish people that Jesus is the Messiah of the Jewish hope; so he is ever appealing to the Old Testament. The Jews have the law from Sinai; Matthew gives the new "law" from the Mount as no other writer does. He does not state plainly that the Messiah is the universal Christ; the Jew isn't ready for that. So he omits the parables of the universal gospel, as the lost sheep, the prodigal son, etc. Yet Matthew has the Great Commission.

15. *Luke* seems to write from another viewpoint. He wants to convince the Greeks that Jesus of Nazareth is the universal Christ, and his view is correspondingly larger. The Jewish reference he omits as far as possible, and he shows the love of God for a world as Matthew does not. The parables of universality are those reported by Luke.

16. *Mark* seems to be the chronicler of Peter. He rushes through the story showing Jesus as the Servant among men, ever busy until the end. No words about the tender beginnings of the Christ, like those of Matthew and Luke, nor yet the deeper teachings of John.

17. *John*—? What shall we say about him? John passes by the details of the life of Jesus. His is a mission that goes farther than any of the rest—and as he is to deal with mystical truth, it comes naturally—through the heart of one who himself is a mystic—for be it observed, God ever uses a man in the line of his own nature. Inspiration does not make a man unnatural. So John, seeing the newer movements against the Christ, the effort to humanize him; seeing the hope in the Greek heart for the Coming One, meets their hope for a *Logos*. “In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God.” And the whole gospel of John takes the world into the secret of the Almighty.

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH HUMAN HEARTS.

18. All these presentations or biographies are divine—it is true, yet the human element is so natural. The truth is universal, all the more acceptable because men like ourselves have brought these messages. Is it not the human element in Jesus that brings him near? And none the less divine is He! (Hebrews 2:17; 4:15).

19. The human element is also manifest in the writings of Paul. He is more than a reporter, he is an interpreter, and he is ever appealing to the experiences of his own life. To the Romans he writes in forensic fashion; to the Corinthians as a father, to the other churches as pastor, friend, brother. Yet the spirit of

Paul, human indeed, is charged with a living fire, which takes the words from his heart and fashions them into the words of God!

SUMMARY.

The human element in the Bible is natural by reason of its writers. They were human. The writers took material from other sources; the "truth" was not confined to one people, though hidden under much error. Other accounts of creation strengthen Genesis instead of weaken it. There was also world-knowledge of the Old Testament, making its prophecies common property. The "ideals" of the Bible are the same in essence. The ideals of Genesis are the eternal ideals of God. The human element is evident from the characteristics of the writers, as seen in the prophecies and the gospels and epistles. God spake *through* human hearts.

QUIZ.

Why should it be natural that the story of Genesis is found in old documents? Define the difference between them. (See also Chapter IV for answer.) Give the "gist" of the French scholar's remark, in paragraph 4. How does the presence of other documents strengthen Genesis? What was the effect of a world-knowledge of the old Jewish scriptures? How can there be development without a change in moral ideals? Define the human elements in the gospels. Give the purpose of some of the writers. If possible memorize the Summary.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

Inspiration does not destroy personality.

God's use of surrendered personality. Give instances.

Christ was human, yet he was divine. The Bible is also human, yet it is the word of God.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Repeat books of the Bible.

The books of the Bible were divided into sections for convenient reading at an early date. It is said that Cardinal Hugo made the division into chapters in 1250. In the Ninth Century Jewish scholars put the Old Testament into verses. Robert Stephens, a printer, divided the New Testament into verses in 1551.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DIVINE ELEMENTS.

1. "The Bible not only contains the word of God—it is the word of God." "The Bible is the inspired word of God."

These statements so commonly made, are cordially accepted. It is difficult to formulate a theory of inspiration which will be acceptable to every one. The truth is, we are not compelled to formulate a theory of inspiration; we may hold to the blessed fact. The mind unsettled by theories may be settled by facts. No man knows just how Christ saves him; but any man may sweetly rest in the fact that Christ does save him.

2. The method adopted by God to impart truth to his prophets and teachers can never be definitely determined. How God inspired the Bible we cannot know. Strictly speaking, it was the men who were inspired, and not the Bible.*

The writers of the Bible are regarded as "men who spake from God." They were human, men of like passions as we are, yet their word was clothed with power, coming from hearts,

*The following statement of Westcott in his Introduction to the Study of the Gospels, covers the case admirably: "Inspiration, then, according to its manifestation in Scripture, is dynamical and not mechanical; the human powers of the divine messenger act according to their natural laws, even when those powers are supernaturally strengthened. Man is not converted into a mere machine, even in the hand of God." (Page 14.)

"being moved by the Holy Spirit." This divine element, guiding, controlling them, made their human words the vehicle of God's thought, so their words became the words of the Most High.

SOME GENERAL EVIDENCES OF DIVINE ELEMENTS IN SCRIPTURE.

3. There are some general evidences of this divine element that controlled all, which we may discuss freely. Let us retrace our steps a little, so that we shall have the matter fully before us. We have said in an earlier chapter that man is naturally religious. Now all religion demands a revelation. Man seeks for it, listens for it, and if he does not hear a voice, he creates one, and his creations have made some tragic history. Man is a sinner, and he knows it; he cannot lift himself out of his degradation; he is a fallen creature and needs redemption. The business of the Bible is to show him the way out of his degradation. Has the Bible done this, and so proven itself to be the revelation of God?

4. *Personal experience* is an argument here. No other book has wrought such changes for good in human life. If a tree is tested by the fruit it bears, the Bible may also be tested in the same way. It has vindicated itself by its fruit. The Bible has vindicated itself as a divine message again and again. Its triumph in the life of individuals is the marvel of history. The universal experience of men is so faithfully reflected in the Bible that its claims as a divine

revelation cannot be disputed. One who reads it finds his inmost thoughts exposed, and is constrained to say, "This is none other than the word of God." To this may be added the general *world experience*. The Bible and civilization are words that may be used interchangeably, for one can scarcely be used without defining or expressing the other. The divine element in the Bible outshines all others, and we see only the vision of Him whose revelation it is.

5. *Survival of attacks* is also a factor in the argument. No human book could have been so brought together, no human book could have survived such attacks as have been made against the Bible. Through all the years it has stood, and today it is the impregnable rock on which is built the structure of the civilized world. It is a remarkable fact that every attack upon it is followed by its firmer intrenchment in the common esteem; it emerges into fuller light after the smoke of battle clears away.

THE PROPHETS SPOKE FOR GOD.

6. The prophets of the Bible were men who claimed to have been sent of God to the work they had to do, and also declared that the words they spake were not their own. The mere claim that a man speaks for God is not always sufficient evidence for his claim. Men nowadays "speak for God" in a very real sense; but few of them make the distinct and peculiar claim made by the prophets. An examination of the following will explain the difference and dis-

tinction here made. The Bible is so full of these affirmations that it is difficult to make a selection, but a few will suffice.

Moses was sent—against his will. See Ex. 3 : 11; 4 : 10-12. The whole of these chapters are worth reading in this connection. Again and again, in Deuteronomy, he claimed that his word was God's word. See Deut. 6 : 1, 2, 6; 10 : 1; 29 : 1. Note especially Deut. 18 : 18-20.

Isaiah was called in a similar way, and he responded hesitatingly. See Isa. 6 : 1-8.

Jeremiah also hesitated, but went as a prophet. His words were God's words. They were thrown into the fire by the king, but the prophet reproduced them, as God instructed him. Consider Jer. 1 : 5-10; 36 : 20-32.

The "minor prophets," as they are called, invariably claimed for themselves divine authority. They did not speak their own words, but as God instructed them. The divine character of their messages was proven again and again in Hebrew history.

All through the Psalms is the clear indication of the divine element overtopping all other elements, making the Psalms the expression of the highest inspiration. "The Spirit of the Lord was upon me, and his word was upon my tongue."

THE UNDERTONE IN PROPHECY.

7. Retracing our steps, we may consider another aspect of the theme in the undertone so clearly revealed in all the prophecies in the

Old Testament. There was a burden upon the prophets concerning events far beyond the limits of their age and circumstances. Their messages were to their own times, yet they ever lifted a voice toward a time which was to come. Their utterances were as a note of hope for the future, a clear and resonant note, not born of their own days and conditions. It is here called an undertone, a song that required years for fulfilment, long after the prophets had passed away. They were pointing to a time known only to God, yet revealed to them in a figure.

They were groping after something, after some One. They had intimations of an ultimate outcome of things of which they spake, but they themselves did not comprehend their full meaning (1 Peter 1:10, 11). To take away this conclusion is to make the prophets incoherent to themselves, and to the people of their time. If we grant the *hope* of Israel, which was for a Messiah, the utterances of the prophets become intelligible, and the divine element, even the complete inspiration of these utterances, becomes self-evident. It will be remembered that the angel in Revelation said to John, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. 19:10).

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

8. In the New Testament the promise of Christ to his disciples was that they should be guided into all truth. "Truth" to Jesus was

contained in the Old Testament. While it is sometimes said that we cannot quote him explicitly, yet it is evident that he looked upon the Old Testament as the veritable word of God. (This special phase of the subject belongs to a later chapter. It is mentioned here merely to make a continuous argument, if such it might be called.)

9. Paul declared his divine call, and insisted on divine revelation for his messages and letters (Gal. 1:11-13, etc.). The suggestion that he once or twice ventured his own opinion only confirms the fact that when he did not make such reservations he spoke the mind of the Lord. Beyond this obvious conclusion, no discussion of the few instances when he said that he did not speak by command need be entered upon.

THE UNITY OF THE BIBLE.

10. We may also consider another phase of the theme which is likely to be overlooked. The Bible should be considered as an organic unity. The marvel is, that while it is a "Divine Library," of sixty-six books, it is after all one book, with an unfolding story from beginning to end. This unity is clearly a divine unity. From beginning to end it articulates the mind of God, and is his complete and final word to the world. It is the divine standard as well as the human rule. Differing from most literary productions, its climax is somewhere near the center. It culminates in Jesus Christ. With-

out resorting to a mechanical effort, the unfolding of the Bible moves naturally towards Christ. The great beginning, the fall of man, the devious way by which he wandered from God, now coming out into the light, then disappearing again in the depths of sin, he is ever moving on, until he stands face to face with Christ. While the book of Revelation may not be where some scholars think it ought to be, in the arrangement of the Bible, there seems to be peculiar fitness to its position. It takes a long look into the future, the final battle is fought, evil is put down, and once more man enters the "garden," where the river of life is flowing, where the people of God are at home, safe forevermore, and Christ is all in all! Into that place the tempter cannot come, the victory is complete!

11. What is the natural conclusion concerning this book? That it is the word of God, that in it his voice is heard, speaking through men to men; that it is so adapted to human modes of thought as to be understood, now deeper than the reach of the philosopher's plummet, then simple as a child's primer, and, whether to prince or peasant, whether to sage or dullard, whether to age or youth, speaking to the soul of man in terms so self-revealing, so imperative, so persuasive, as to convince the responsive spirit that it is listening to the voice of God.

OTHER SCRIPTURES.

12. There were other "sacred" writings called the Apocrypha, that is, scriptures that were not

sufficiently authenticated to be placed in the canon, or the accepted collection of books. Some of these writings are worthy, while others are decidedly inferior. In most of these writings the tone and spirit are entirely different from the books in the Bible. The evidence is unmistakable. *In the Bible the over-and-above-control of the Spirit of God, beyond that shown by any other writers in any other books, is self-evident, from the character of the work done, the men who did it, the subject they were handling, and the permanent effects of it.* Thus there are two evidences that speak unerringly: The written word and the human heart. The written word is authoritative—"it finds" man; and the human heart recognizes the voice—it is the voice of God.

PAUL'S FINAL WORD.

The final word of Paul may furnish our conclusion of the matter: Urging Timothy to keep close to the Scriptures, he stamps them with his own approval in these words: "But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3 : 14-17).

SUMMARY.

It is difficult to define the method of inspiration, though the fact can be maintained. The experience of men and nations, the survival of the Bible in attacks, attest its divine character. The prophets claimed divine authority for their mission and messages. Christ looked upon the Old Testament as a divine message. Paul claimed divine authority for his letters; the organic unity of the Bible, its definite pointing to Christ, the whole content of the book, declare it to be of God, and not of man.

QUIZ.

How were the writers of the Old Testament regarded in New Testament times? (II Peter 1:19-21.) What does experience declare as to the divine element in the Bible? What is the argument from the age of the Bible? How did the prophets regard themselves? Give the experiences of Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah. What is the evident note in the Psalms? How did Paul regard himself and his work? What was the undertone in the prophecies of the Old Testament? What makes the Bible one book? What can we say about apocryphal scriptures? Give Paul's words to Timothy. Memorize the Summary, and, if possible, the italicized lines in paragraph 12.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

No other book in the world so brought together, with such an evident purpose. What the natural conclusion must be.

God's ways of influencing men are not always traceable, yet the path may be seen.

The effect of the Bible on one's own life. "It finds us."

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Review, as far as possible, the previous "facts" learned.

It is not known who completed the old Testament collection. It was in its present state about 170 B. C.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STORY OF THE MANUSCRIPTS

Part I.

As It Is—and as It Was.

1. It will be a matter of great interest to the young Christian to know how he came by his Bible. Here lies a Bible, in its beautiful Levant binding, printed on rice paper, in large type, with red under-gold edges—the finest product of the modern printer's and book-binder's art. Came it so to us from heaven? Came it so to us down the centuries? Was it in this beautiful form that Moses and the prophets left their contributions to it? Is this the book the apostles and disciples left to us as their legacy? No. Our Bible did not come to us a complete volume, dropped from the skies; nor yet was it unearthed as a hidden treasure. It grew, as all things with life must grow, and passed through test and trial, to the present volume. The young Christian of this day can scarcely realize that the sacred writers of old would not be able to read his Bible, for in the days of their writing, paper, printed page, bound books, and English language were things unknown.

So the story of the making of the Bible, and

how we came by it, tracing it through the centuries, from the ancient original manuscripts, and the hand-made copies and brilliant illuminations through many translations into ancient tongues, down to the present complete volume of the modern version, must ever be a story of fascinating interest and delight.

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

2. The Old Testament was originally written almost entirely in Hebrew. A small portion, was written in Aramaic. The books, or *biblia*, were written scrolls of papyrus; *Biblia* being a Greek word, referring not only to the papyrus plant, but also to the writing material made from its stalk. Owing to the nature of the contents of these books, or *biblia*, they came to be referred to as "the books," as for instance in Daniel 9 : 2. This name came in time also to include the New Testament books, having been so applied as early as the fourth century. The entire sixty-six books, coming to be looked upon as the work of One Great Author, they came to be called "The Book," or, "The Bible."

3. The Old Testament had many authors and compilers. Its making extended approximately through eleven centuries—a stretch of time which covered many distinctly marked epochs of history. The name "testament" is from the Latin, *Testamentum*, which means, covenant, signifying God's covenant with his people; the prefixes, Old and New, signified God's first and last covenant with his people.

It is not known just when the collection was completed. Moses ordered the "Book of the Law" to be put "by the side of the ark" (Deut. 31 : 26; 2 Kings 22 : 8). To this was added Joshua (Josh. 24 : 26), and later, Proverbs and some Prophecies, for Daniel refers to "the book" (see above). Zechariah refers to the law and former prophets (7 : 12), and Isaiah refers to the "book of the Lord" (29 : 18; 34 : 16). Ezra and the Great Synagogue most probably determined the Canon of the Law in its final shape; and Nehemiah "gathered together the acts of the Kings and the prophets, and those of David," when founding a library for the second temple (2 Macc. 2 : 13), 432 B. C.

THE DIFFERENCE—THEN AND NOW.

4. The Hebrew Old Testament, though containing the same books as ours of today, differs in number and arrangement—the old Hebrew having twenty-four books, and the modern thirty-nine. This is due to the two-book books of Kings, Samuel, and Chronicles, being counted as one; and the twelve minor prophets as one; and as one, Ezra and Nehemiah. The three-fold Jewish division was the same then as now: The law, the prophets, the sacred writings.

THE SEPTUAGINT.

5. Such was the Bible of Jesus and the apostles. But it had been translated into Greek. In the third century before Christ, the Hebrew

language had passed from common use, and though in no sense a dead language, it was chiefly "the holy language, the language of temple worship, of synagogical and domestic prayer; of all formulas of benediction, of the traditional law." (*Delitzsch.*)

6. In Palestine at this time the native Jew spoke Aramaic, a dialect of unknown origin, somewhat like the Hebrew, which pressed in upon Palestine from the north. But the conquering Greek had brought his language, with which the educated had become familiar, and which was also spoken by many of the common people. Even the conquests of Rome did not dislodge the Greek language, and it remained the language of fashion and of education, of commerce, and of diplomacy; while Hebrew remained the language of the synagogue. Strange as it may seem, though the Aramaic had superseded the Hebrew, there was no Aramaic translation of the Bible at this time.

7. This Greek translation of the Bible was not for the Palestine Jew. The Jew had wandered from his native land, even into Egypt. It was in the old and famed city of Alexandria that the translation of the Old Testament into Greek was made. This translation was called the Septuagint, or the version of The Seventy, from an old tradition that it was the work of seventy learned Jews of Alexandria. It readily came into use in Palestine, and being much cheaper than Hebrew scrolls, soon found its way into the homes of even the humble. So the Greek

Old Testament became the Bible of Jesus and his apostles. Their familiarity with it is proven by their frequent quotations from it—fully three hundred quotations in the New Testament, being taken from the Greek Septuagint rather than the Hebrew Scriptures.

APOCRYPHAL WRITINGS—BEFORE CHRIST.

8. For four hundred years before the coming of Christ no prophetic voice broke the silence of the centuries. It was during this time that the Jews were shamefully persecuted by the Greeks and Romans. It was also during this period that the Septuagint was made. During this time certain Jewish scholars attempted to add other "sacred" writings. These writings, though more or less worthy, were regarded with suspicion by devout Jews of Palestine, were not accorded a hearing in the synagogue, and of course were not counted worthy of a place in their sacred scriptures. These writings were known as the Apocrypha, which term has commonly been understood as meaning "unauthenticated." In the New Testament there are no quotations from the apocryphal writings, save a possible reference to the book of Enoch.

CONCERNING THE NEW TESTAMENT.

9. The Greek Old Testament, used by Jesus, the apostles and the evangelists, was also the Bible of the early Christian Church. So engaged were the apostles and the evangelists in proclaiming Christ, his life, death, resurrec-

tion, and ascension, to be the fulfilment of the prophecy of the Old Testament, thus throwing new light upon the Old Testament, that for some time no other writings seemed necessary. It was only as special occasions arose in the growth of the churches, that "writings" began again. In the immediate years after the ascension, the apostles, having been eye-witnesses, spoke from memory of the deeds and teachings of Christ. But a day came when such records would become permanent. So Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, gave the life of Christ in their four gospels. This is called the biographical division of the New Testament.

NEEDS CREATING WRITINGS.

10. There was a need, however, which preceded the biographical part of the New Testament. As the gospel spread and churches grew, there was need of instruction for the various churches, and sometimes for individuals. So letters or "epistles" were written, defining the gospel in its relation to the life of the people, and the natural unfolding of the new teaching connected therewith. Thus, from Romans to Jude, we have the epistolary division. The spread of the gospel and the growth of the churches gave rise to a need of a history of the early Christian movement, and so The Acts was written, making the historical section of the New Testament. Again the voice of prophecy spoke—which gave us Revelation, the prophetical section of the New Testament.

THE WORK OF YEARS.

11. The Old Testament was the product of the centuries; the New Testament the product of a single age. Yet the same characteristics prevailed in the making of both Testaments—they grew without the knowledge or purpose of the writers; that is, there was no preconcerted plan in the building or arrangement of the New Testament. All of which shows more fully the leading of the Spirit of God in the plan, purpose, and unity of the Sacred Scriptures.

12. These books of the New Testament, written by various authors, written at different times and places, were in the possession of the early Christian Church somewhere in the beginning of the second century. About the beginning of the third century these writings were known as the New Testament, and are so mentioned by the church fathers. This title became general by the middle of that century. Not all the books, however, were included at that time; but by the beginning of the fourth century all the writings now included in the New Testament were accepted by the churches as the final and authoritative word. The greatest care was exercised in the choice of the books finally admitted to the canon. For two hundred years no writings appeared that seemed to be worthy of a place in the sacred collection. It was evident that the "faith once for all delivered to the saints" had been given its complete setting. So the books were determined upon, those that

stood the test of time and scholarship, and experience, making the canon. The decree of the Council of Carthage in A. D. 397 finally decided the New Testament canon.

13. There were also other writings during this period, biblical in appearance and character, but they did not stand the final test of the scholarship of that day. They were not included in the "canon." These books or writings were also known as Apocryphal books, some of them making excellent reading. They were of great help in the translation of the Revised Version, on account of their many quotations from the New Testament writings.

THE BOOK COMPLETED.

14. So the New Testament was completed. It had to stand the test of the best scholarship of its day; it was subjected to the attacks of enemies from without, and enemies from within; withal it had to stand the greater test of its being true to the life of Him whose message it bore, and the lives of those who sought to live according to the divine standards. Yet it outrode the storms safely, and has come down to us, hoary with age, yet bright with the light of divine life. It is the enduring message of God to man; and the story is the full revelation of God through Jesus Christ. It remains to this day, and will abide forever.

The story of the making, the losing, the destruction, the rescuing, and the translation of the old manuscripts, that make our modern

Bible, reads like a romance. In the next chapter we will have this wonderful story.

SUMMARY.

The Bible of the ancients was not in the beautiful shape of the modern Bible. The Old Testament was first translated into Greek in the third century before Christ. It is called the Septuagint or version of the Seventy. Jesus and the apostles used this translation, though it was never read in the synagogues. The New Testament was written at various times in the beginning of the Christian era. The collection was finally accepted by the churches in A. D. 397, through the action of a Church Council, the Council of Carthage.

QUIZ.

In what language was the Old Testament written? What language was used in the New Testament? What was the Septuagint? Why was the Septuagint given to the world? Explain the meanings of Apocryphal writings? What local needs helped in the making of the New Testament? When was the New Testament completed? Memorize Summary.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The needs of the early church were universal needs. The message of the epistles to us today.

The natural difficulties in making and preserving writings—no printing press. Our blessings in view of these things.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

The word “canon” originally meant a straight rule, or reed for measuring. When we speak of the biblical canon, we mean, to use Westcott’s definition, “the collection of books which constitute the original written rule of the Christian faith.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE STORY OF THE MANUSCRIPTS.

Part II.

1. We have traced the gradual growth of the books of the old prophets to their acceptance as a volume of inspired writings, called the Old Testament. In like manner we have seen the gradual growth of the Christian writings up to their acceptance as a volume of sacred literature called the New Testament. The books were in the form of ancient hand-written scrolls. The original Old Testament in Hebrew; the New Testament in Greek. These were the original manuscripts; manuscripts, as the name indicates, meaning written by hand. Use, age, and enmity, destroyed these in time, but numerous careful copies had been made, and the messages were preserved, and handed down to coming generations, and in time were translated into various languages.

THE BIBLE IN EARLY DAYS.

2. At the beginning of the second century the churches could have furnished a few manuscripts of the Hebrew Old Testament, a large number of Greek translations of the Old Testament; originals, or direct copies of the epistles of Paul, Peter, and John, the gospels, the Acts,

and Revelation. From these manuscripts copies were made by the long, tedious, careful process, of transcribing by hand. When we consider the slow and expensive process of making a copy of even one book of the Bible, we may get some idea of the expense and labor entailed, and will realize how rare and precious, as well as how bulky, a volume must needs have been. These copies are now commonly referred to as the manuscripts.

THE TEDIOUS COPYING.

3. It is easy to realize that in the tedious process of copying, even by the most trustworthy and capable scribe, errors and omissions might occur, and marginal notes intended to help the reader, might, by copying, creep into the text. Copying from copies also would add to these errors and omissions. So that by the time the first printed Bible made its appearance it naturally contained some of these errors. Yet withal it is amazing that so few errors were made. Beside the many copyings it had undergone, many translations into other tongues had been made. There are four hundred of these. It was in the beginning of the seventeenth century that it reached our Authorized English translation—of course a printed copy.

A LOOK BACKWARD.

4. Let us retrace our steps a little, and gather up the historic translations which led to this great version which has been the joy of the whole earth.

A translation from an original into another language is known as a *version*. The first great version, as stated in the last chapter, was the Septuagint, begun in the third century before Christ. It was in Greek. The second great version was the Vulgate, made A. D., 404, by the learned Jerome, in the old city of Bethlehem; he spent twenty-one years in the work. He was the greatest scholar of his day. His was a translation into Latin partly from originals, and partly from previous Latin versions. The name Vulgate means common or current, since it was the version in general use.

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS.

5. As early as the eighth and ninth centuries portions of the Scriptures were translated into English. But the first entire translation into English was made by John Wycliffe, 1380-1382. This was translated from the Vulgate, and was written by hand. It was afterwards revised by others. The first Bible to be *printed* in English was Tyndale's Bible, in 1525. It was translated directly into English from Greek and Hebrew manuscripts. He was burned at the stake for his work !

6. Many translations followed Tyndale's work, those most noted being, Coverdale's, 1535; the Genevan Bible, 1560; the Bishop's Bible, 1568.

KING JAMES' BIBLE.

7. But the great translation of the years was that which has been so loved and admired for

the last three centuries—the Authorized, or King James' Version, by whose order it was made. *It was seven years in making, and was the work of scholarly men. Never before had such care and research been expended upon a translation of the Bible. It was a work of unusual value because of the very old Greek and Hebrew manuscripts which were consulted, and the comparison with the best versions then extant, some of them dating back to the fourth and fifth century, A. D. This leads to the natural conclusion that the older a manuscript the more reliable it is likely to be, and that a copy made directly from a manuscript is more reliable than a copy from a copy.

WHY A NEW REVISION?

8. Notwithstanding the excellency of the Authorized Version, nearly three hundred years later a revision was determined upon. It was not an easy task, for the old version had inwrought itself into the lives of the people. It seemed as though this were the real heaven-

*It came about in this way. There were three versions of the Bible in England in the time of King James, the Genevan the Bishops', and the "Great Bible." Copies of this "Great Bible" were chained to the desks in some of the country churches. None of these versions were satisfactory. The interpretation of some of the texts were displeasing—being used against the King by the Puritan party. So the King called for a new revision of the Bible. All parties were represented in this great movement. The King wanted a Bible to suit his views! But honest work was done in the translation. "Never before had such labor and care been expended on the English Bible. The revisers were divided into six companies, each of which took its own portion, and every aid accessible was used to make their work a thorough success. They carefully studied the Greek and Hebrew; they used the best commentaries of European scholars; the Bible in Spanish, Italian, French, and German were examined for any help they might afford in arriving at the exact sense of each passage."—*How We Got Our Bible*, page 101.

sent Bible. Who would dare to change this sacred volume? But the world was reminded that during the centuries since the old version had been given, new and wonderful things had happened, which threw new-old light upon the old book.

UNCIALS AND CURSIVES.

9. Before relating this wonderful story, let us fix a few necessary facts in mind. As has already been said, the older the manuscript the more reliable it is likely to be; but to determine the age of a manuscript is not an easy task. The chief aid in doing so is the form of letters used. The oldest form is the *uncial*, meaning large, as applied to letters. In *uncial* manuscripts only capital letters were used, with no spaces between words, and without punctuation, thus :

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Manuscripts of later date are written in a running hand, more like modern writing, and are called *cursive* manuscripts, meaning a running hand. Illuminated manuscripts with initials, and ornamentations, are readily recognized as of much later date. So the plain, unattractive, worn, old parchments, with the square *uncial* letters, are the greatly prized and greatly valued manuscripts.

10. All this has practical bearing upon the subject of the present Revised Version. It was the *cursive* manuscripts that were used in the

King James's Version; for the good reason that the old uncials were not in possession of the scholarship of that day.

OLD UNCIAL MANUSCRIPTS.

In the strange providence of God three old uncial manuscripts had come to light since the King James' Version had been completed. They are known as the Vatican, Sinaitic, and Alexandrian manuscripts, and are today in the possession of the three great branches of the Christian Church—using a commonly understood phrase. Where did they come from?

11. The Alexandrian manuscript is known as Codex A. It was found in an old library in Alexandria, in 1628, and was presented by the Patriarch of Constantinople, to Charles I. of England. It was discovered too late to be of service to the King James' revisers. It may be seen in the manuscript room of the British Museum, London.

12. The Vatican Manuscript, known as Codex B, is in the possession of the Roman Catholic Church, and has been in the Vatican Library for over four hundred years. It was grudgingly and narrowly safeguarded from the eyes of scholars, until the days of Pius IX, who caused excellent fac similes to be made, which gave them to the world.

TISCHENDORF'S ROMANCE.

13. The discovery of the Sinaitic manuscript reads like a romance. Some sixty years ago,

Dr. Tischendorf, one of the most noted scholars of his day, visited the Convent of St. Catharine, in Mt. Sinai. It was his wont to turn up in out-of-the-way places, in search of precious manuscripts. On this visit he saw a basket of parchments which had been gathered together by the monks of the convent, for the purpose of building a fire. On examination, his keen eyes detected old manuscripts, the oldest he had ever seen, which proved to be copies of the Septuagint. He was permitted to take away forty sheets, his evident joy making the monks suspicious that they had manuscripts of rare value—and so they refused him more. He went home with his precious sheets, and set the world afire with his discovery. But he longed for complete manuscripts.

After considerable difficulty, in which he sought the help of the Egyptian government without avail, he made another visit to the convent, but he found only one sheet of the Septuagint. Again he went away disappointed. After fifteen years of waiting, he secured the help of the Emperor of Russia, and armed with a commission from his majesty he again visited the old convent library. He was about to come away in disappointment when, on the evening before his departure, a great and wonderful thing occurred. The monk in charge invited Tischendorf to his cell for refreshment. In conversation upon the things near to the visitor's heart, the monk told him that he had a copy of the Septuagint, and took down for his

guest's entertainment a well-wrapped and bulky package. Imagine the unspeakable delight of the great scholar when he held in his hand not only the very leaves he had found in the waste-basket, fifteen years before, but other parts of the Old Testament, the New Testament complete, and some of the apocryphal books.

Tischendorf restrained his joy, and asked, with seeming indifference, to examine the book in his room. "And there by myself," he said, "I gave way to my transports of joy. I knew that I held in my hand one of the most precious biblical treasures in existence." Through the good offices of the Russian Emperor the manuscripts were at last secured, and are now in St. Petersburg.

14. These are the three great manuscripts, old, worn, faded, two written on finest vellum—that is, the skin of calves, and one on the skin of antelopes. They are the treasures of the churches, the oldest copies of the Bible in the world, dating as far back as the third and fourth centuries. None of these were accessible for the use of the translators in King James' time. It will be easy to conceive the effect of these manuscripts upon modern scholarship, and the growing desire to once again translate the Bible. With a new scholarship, the most brilliant the world has ever known, the task was undertaken, and the present Revised Bible is the result.

THE REVISED BIBLE.

15. The work was completed in 1881—the

New Testament appearing then; in 1885 the Old Testament appeared. It was the combined work of American and English scholars, and consumed seven years. Twenty years later the American revisers issued this same Bible with their preferred readings inserted. They really went over the whole Bible once more, and we may say that at last we have a perfect copy of the Scriptures—until, new light streams from documents yet unknown. But in all probability scholarship has brought us as near to the originals as may be possible.

As we stand before this Bible, the triumph of the scholarship of the world, one is overwhelmed with gratitude for the work done. Gratitude to God for his guiding Spirit, his preserving care; gratitude to men, the scholarly toilers of the ages, who have made this precious heritage possible for us all. For this book, in its preservation, men have given their lives; for this book men have traveled over lands and seas in search for new light upon the holy page. By day, by night, in all seasons, in sufferings and privations many—they have labored for our good. What do we not owe to these noble men, these giants of the ages, who gave themselves that the world might hear the message of truth and so find the Light of the World. God be thanked for them!

SUMMARY.

The Old Testament as we have it, was intact in Christ's time. At the beginning of the Second Century the New Testament was complete.

The first complete version of the Bible was made by Jerome in 404 A. D. called the Vulgate. The first translation into English was Wycliffe's, 1382. The first *printed* Bible was Tyndale's, 1525. The greatest work was the King James Version, 1611. The Revised Version is the final triumph of the best scholarship of the world. It was completed in 1881-1885. The age of manuscripts is determined by the form of letters. The oldest manuscripts were discovered after 1611, thus making a new translation desirable.

QUIZ.

What does "version" mean? Give the names and dates of the principal versions? Why was a new version necessary? Give the names of the three great manuscripts? How are dates determined? Give the dates of the King James and Revised Versions. Tell the story of the Sinaitic manuscript?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The unselfish service of biblical scholarship.
God's guiding hand through the years.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Memorize the names and dates in this chapter.

CHAPTER X.

THE BIBLE AND JESUS CHRIST.

Part I.

It is possible to look upon Jesus as a beautiful character, and yet deny him the place he holds in the Christian thought of the world. There are admirers of Jesus who look upon him as a lovable man, a man who lived long ago, who wrought well, and who lived to a purpose; but all thought as to his divine character and mission, his strange death and his triumphant resurrection, are put aside. To such he is little more than a great and good man, the best that has yet appeared, it is true, yet only a man. But admiration for Jesus, and love of, and trust in, Jesus are two widely different things. Jesus was more than mere man. His was a nature above the human, though he was thoroughly human. His divine character was peculiarly manifested in his death. He suffered as other men have never suffered. Men have faced death with courage such as Jesus did not manifest when he died. His was submission to a death in which the whole tragedy of human sin was involved, and this made it to differ from all others. If he were not divine we have no explanation of his life or death.

JESUS CHRIST LIVED.

1. We turn to the Bible to learn of Jesus Christ. We need not stop to discuss whether he ever lived. The following words of Dr. William N. Clarke are so to the point that we adopt them and pass on to our discussion:

“Christianity arose from a historical person. Attempts to explain away its founder as a mythical personage have failed, and he stands as a living character, in history. His name was Jesus; his time, the latter half of the eighth century of the Roman period, and the beginning of the Christian era; his race, the Hebrew people; his country, Palestine in Syria; the place of his death, Jerusalem; the Roman procurator at the time, Pontius Pilate; the emperor, Tiberius. These are the facts regarding his place in history. Even if it were shown that myths had gathered about his memory, these facts would stand, for they are as well attested as any facts of the period. The founder of Christianity lived.”

2. This study is not a review of the events of Christ's life. It is a look into the Bible to discover his relation to it, and his fulfilment of it as is claimed by Christians everywhere. Let us go back to the times before he came, and look into the Scriptures of the Hebrew people.

THE OLD TESTAMENT A BOOK OF PROPHECY.

3. The Old Testament is pre-eminently a book of prophecy. It breathes a spirit of hope

and of expectancy. This does not necessarily refer to sayings that were prophetic, but rather to the spirit that possessed the writers and characterized the material they produced. There is continual movement. There is the outworking of a purpose that ever looks to a great final revelation of something—to a condition of life that should be perfect, an ideal humanity, in which righteousness and peace should reign and God and man should be in harmony. Isaiah 35 expresses the hope of the ages. That the actors in the great drama fully comprehended and appreciated the purport of these prophecies and historical movements is scarcely to be supposed. The fact is they did not understand these things; they were blind and often refused to see or hear. Their expectations were material, national, while the undercurrent of the whole prophetic movement was unquestionably spiritual and universal.

4. This prophetic spirit produced two visions: a Person, and a Kingdom. From the very beginning (Gen. 3:15) there was held out the hope of a coming One who should be a deliverer—from the one common bondage that included every other, the bondage of sin. The Person should be also a Prince who should reign perpetually over a world-wide realm.

THE HISTORY IS PROPHETIC.

5. The history of the Old Testament is also prophetic. That is, it is never a completed

history. While this may be said of all history, it is yet particularly true of history in the Old Testament. For instance, we do not regard British or American history as prophetic; we are not looking forward to any other forms of government for these peoples. They feel that they have reached a plane of governmental development that has no prospect of any radical change. They may be wrong in that, but they cherish no larger hope for themselves or the world. But the history in the Bible is never complete in its idealism or its hopes. It is ever looking forward to something other better, something permanent. God is moving in that history in a peculiar way. There is the destruction of a world, with the saving of but one family. There is the separation of one man, and he is sent to begin a new movement, to become the father of a new race, with the prophecy running through all the record that in him the families of the earth should be blessed. There is ever a further revelation to be looked for.

6. This prophetic history becomes more apparent as we follow the story of Moses. He is simply a passing leader; he tells of another who is to come, emphasizing somewhat the idea that the purposes of his coming are not political, but religious, spiritual. We can only touch guideposts in this remarkable subject; but if we fasten them in mind we shall have a conception of the relation of Jesus Christ to the Bible, at once clear, intelligent, and valuable.

Moses is succeeded by Joshua. The Judges cross the pages in what seems to the reader a rapid succession. The Kings come and go. Dissensions, oppressions, wars, slaughters, captivities, fill the intervals of prosperous and happy years. But through all these changes the hope that better things are in store is not allowed to perish. And when it would seem as though the national life must go out in darkness, the beacon of promise is lighted again by some opportune prophet of the Lord, and the people lift their faces in its glow.

PROPHETIC PASSAGES.

7. Consider these scriptures in the light of what is here written of the hope in the Old Testament. Deut. 18:15-18; Isaiah 2:2; 28:16; 32:1, 2; 35:4; 42:1-6; Ezekiel 34:23-31; Dan. 2:44; Micah 4:1; Zech. 3:8.

These Scriptures are here indicated merely to establish the statement that the Old Testament, both in its history and in its spiritual unfoldings is prophetic, looking to a time in the future when there should be a final revelation, a perfect condition of things. Even after prophecy closed, as recorded in the Old Testament, this prophetic spirit is discovered. In the books commonly known as the Apocrypha there is an indication of a hope that still abides in the hearts of the people for a Coming One. The common expectation is also revealed in the New Testament. "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?"

(Matt. 11:3). The hope, outside of Judaism, giving a glimpse of the common expectation of a Messiah, is beautifully revealed in the conversation which Jesus had with the Samaritaness in John 4:25.

There are several other considerations which must be presented before we can properly consider the relation of Jesus Christ to these scriptures.

THE OLD TESTAMENT AN UNFINISHED PRODUCT.

8. The Old Testament, both as a history and a prophecy, is clearly an unfinished book. No matter which method is adopted in gathering the various books together, the arrangement lacks much to complete it. The book is unfinished in the hands of the Jew. The ideal kingdom is not realized; the Deliverer has not come; the Messiah is yet to appear.

9. Laying aside the New Testament, for the time, it is important to note the growing change in the attitude of the modern Jew to the prophetic element in the Old Testament. There is today no looking for a Messiah in the old sense; there is no hope for the fulfilment of prophecy such as was clearly the hope of the Jews long ago. Outside of the New Testament, with its Messiah as the fulfilment of the Old Testament, there is evidently no hope for the Jew. Rejecting the New Testament, the modern Jew has sought comfort in looking in another direction. No longer expecting a Messiah, such as was the hope of the prophets, he has idealized

prophecy. It is a Messianic condition of human society, a peaceful life in which the opposing elements, like the lion and the lamb of prophecy, shall lie down together—that is, they shall dwell peaceably together. While this seems an easy way out of a difficult question, we can scarcely be expected to accept it as fulfilling the prophecies, both as regards the spoken words of the writers and the historical movement in the Old Testament. We must look farther for its fulfilment. It is the strangest phenomenon in all history if the Old Testament does not find a New Testament to complete it.

JESUS CREATED A NEW LITERATURE.

10. The coming of Jesus Christ into the world created another literature. It is fair to say that no writer in the New Testament dreamed of the use which would be made of the work he was doing. Had there been a manifest design to write books, or chapters, which would fit into the Old Testament, thus completing it, nothing but failure would have been the result. It is one of the strongest proofs of the guidance of the Spirit of God in the production of the various books and letters in the New Testament, that the whole production is of such a character as to fit the Old Testament, making it complete in every particular. And the manner of its writing, the wide separation in time of its various letters, yet more clearly indicates the hand of God in the work. No man could have done it; no set of men could have undertaken the task with

any hope of success. There is the spontaneity of the Spirit working in the hearts of men, so manifest that a fair mind must be convinced of its genuineness as a veritable work of God.

THE FINAL QUESTION.

11. The question that remains for us to consider is: Does Jesus Christ fill out the outline of prophecy and history as is claimed for the Old Testament? Is his relation to it fanciful or is it real? Have we forced the parallelism or is there a clear agreement between the Messiah Christ and the Old Testament? In short, is the case proven—that Jesus Christ is the Messiah of the Old Testament, the Prince who was to reign, the Prophet who was to come? Has he in himself fulfilled history and prophecy? Is he the One who was to come, or do we look for another? The Jew read the Old Testament, and then looked for an earthly Kingdom, a political power, a kingdom that should triumph over the Roman, and make Judaism the crown of the whole earth. In these days, as said before, he sometimes reads the Old Testament and spiritualizes the Messiah, saying that he is purely an ideal toward which we are to struggle. Shall we make the same mistake? If only a spiritual Messiah, an Ideal Kingdom, where shall relief be found for the longing of men for a real Christ, God coming to men? Where shall relief be found from the burden of sin? To these questions we will set ourselves in the next chapter.

SUMMARY.

Jesus is more than a beautiful character. His life and death demand more than a human explanation. Jesus is a fact of history—*he was!* The Old Testament is prophetic in its utterances and in its history. There is a movement toward a Messiah and a Messianic Kingdom. It closes without fulfilment. Jews no longer look for a personal Messiah, so the Old Testament is unfulfilled—therefore an unfinished product. Jesus creates a new literature, which strangely completes the Old Testament. Is he the Messiah of the Old Testament, the Prince and King who was to come?

QUIZ.

Memorize the Summary. What can we say of the *fact* of Jesus? (Quote Dr. Clarke in paragraph 1.) Why should we say that the Old Testament is prophetic in word and in its history? Outline the prophetic element in paragraph 7. Why is the Old Testament unfinished? What is the attitude of many Jews today? What literature did the coming of Jesus create?

[NOTE.—1. It will greatly add to the value of this study if written answers are urged upon the students. 2. "Jesus the Jew," by Harris Weinstock, will aid in sidelight reading on the present attitude of the Jew toward the Messiah.]

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The Old Testament a book of hope. Its unfulfilled expectations. It raised great questions—where may we find the answer?

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Repeat facts already learned.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BIBLE AND JESUS CHRIST.

Part II.

1. Is Jesus Christ the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy, so completing the book, giving it a unity otherwise lacking?

Before we seek an answer to this important question, let us get the conclusions of the previous chapter fairly before us. The Old Testament is prophetic in its spirit, its utterances, and in its history. In this view prophecy may be regarded as relating more to the great purpose of God than to things or events. God's great purpose in the Old Testament centers about a Coming One—a Chosen One to come out of a people separated from the other peoples of the earth. The story or history is never complete. There is the saving of a man, a tribe, a nation, always in order to a fuller revelation which is to be made in the fulness of time. Prophecy—in event and utterance, ceases, and the book closes with the great Revelation yet to be made.

THE STORY RESTATED.

2. Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, Judea, at the beginning of the Christian era nearly two thousand years ago. The con-

ditions and tokens attending his birth, as recorded in the gospels, render it unique, differing altogether from the birth of other children. The story of His life is recorded by the four evangelists—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. He died at the age of 33. He arose from the dead, and after a few weeks upon the earth he went away leaving the work he had begun in the hands of a few disciples. His departure from the earth was as unique as his advent. He "ascended into heaven." The men he left behind were unlearned men, wholly incapable of inventing the facts of his life, or building a fictitious system upon his teachings. That he lived, died, rose again, cannot be intelligently disputed. How is he related to the Old Testament? Is the New Testament which was written by his followers a fitting conclusion to the Old Testament, completing it, fulfilling it? To answer these questions in the affirmative is to declare Jesus to be the revelation of God, the One who was to come, the fulfiller of all prophecy, "the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9 : 6).

Two ELEMENTS IN PROPHECY.

3. The Scripture citations in paragraph 7, in the previous chapter, outline the prophetic hope, looking to the One who was to come. We do well to go over them, and get the main facts in mind. We are now concerned with their fulfilment. There are two elements,

doubtless, in many of these prophecies. One is the element of immediate application; the prophets using their messages for immediate spiritual help. We often discover the primary significance to the people of that day —else were the messages of no practical worth to the people. But there is also the element of larger and more remote fulfilment, in which the purposes of God for the whole world can be seen and understood. It is not always easy to separate these elements, nor is it necessary to do so, if we can see the larger fulfilment in Jesus Christ.

THE COMING ONE IN CONTACT WITH EVIL.

4. The Coming One was to have direct contact with evil—he should bruise the serpent's head, and the serpent should bruise his heel. This passage in Gen. 3 : 15, the first prophecy concerning One who was to come, and the work he was to do, is most significant, seeing that it relates the Coming One to the great tragedy of sin, its overthrow, and Christ's own suffering in the fearful battle. This is mentioned here, as showing at once the spiritual meaning of the mission of Jesus—assuming that the promise in Gen. 3 : 15 refers to him. His trial and death relate him so closely to this prophecy that its relevancy can scarcely be questioned. It has no meaning save as Christ's death unfolds it.

EVENTS FORETOLD.

5. With this made clear, we may consider

other references to him. His birth is somewhat startlingly stated in Micah 5:2. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall One come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." It is to be noted here that the ruler was to be born in Bethlehem, but that he was from everlasting. Here was no earthly ruler predicted. In Isaiah 9:6 the same great truth is revealed, though Bethlehem is not named.

6. Other incidents or features of his coming are indicated in Psalm 72:10, 15; Isaiah 60:3, 6. One can say with all fairness that if these Scriptures do not point to Christ, and have their fulfilment in him, there is no intelligent meaning to them. Gifts were brought to him, as was predicted. Other incidental foregleams may be considered in Hosea 11:1, and Jeremiah 31:15.

His character, as revealed in the New Testament, was also outlined in the Old Testament. The reader is again referred to the scriptures in paragraph 7 of the previous chapter for an adequate setting forth of this matter. The Coming One was to be Jehovah (Isa. 40:3). In Matthew 3:3, John takes up this cry in his preparatory work for the appearing of Jesus. In the matter of Jesus' fulfilling the Old Testament ideal of the One to Come who should reveal God, *being* God come to men, consider also these scriptures: John 1:1; Titus

2 : 13; Hebrews 1 : 8, 10; I John 5 : 20; Eph. 2 : 6, 7; Col. 2 : 9. It is not our purpose here to make a full selection of the many scriptures which are regarded as prefiguring the Messiah and those that show how completely he fulfilled them. That is impossible, and not necessary. It is sufficient to indicate the manifestly prominent points in this great teaching.

SUFFERINGS AND DEATH FORETOLD.

7. The incidents connected with the sufferings and death of the Coming One are strikingly clear in the Old Testament, and their fulfilment in the last days of Jesus are so manifest that one needs but to mention them in order to be fully convinced of their truth. He was to be rejected by both Jews and Gentiles—Psalm 2 : 1; consider the saying of John in 1 : 11; his entry into Jerusalem—Zech. 9 : 9; his sad betrayal by his own friend—Zech. 13 : 6; his silence under accusation—Isa. 53 : 7. The other incidents of his sufferings and death are more or less foreshadowed in Psalm 35 : 15, 21; Isa. 50 : 6; Psalm 22 : 14, 17; 22 : 1; 31 : 5; Amos 5 : 20; Zech. 14 : 4-6.

8. Standing out above all the others, is the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. It will be better, for a clearer view of the picture drawn by Isaiah, to begin at the 13th verse of the preceding chapter. In all the book there is no better setting forth of the Christ as we know him. The whole scheme of redemption seems to be embodied there, and the photograph of Christ is com-

plete. When Philip meets the eunuch, in Acts 8:26-40, the eunuch is reading this matchless chapter. It does not take long for Philip to show him that the Messiah of the Old Testament is Jesus the Christ.

This, then, is the conclusion to which we have come. Jesus Christ is the Messiah of the Old Testament; his life and death and resurrection prove him to have fulfilled the expectation of all prophecy; he was the One that was to come.

JESUS FULFILS THE OLD TESTAMENT.

9. We may conclude this study with a few general reflections:

Jesus Christ fulfilled the Old Testament in his divine character, his divine service, his remarkable death, his triumphant resurrection. That which was foretold and fulfilled in him makes him the final and complete Revelation of God; makes his teaching divine, eternal, supernatural. So the Old Testament is fulfilled by the New Testament; the covenants are one and inseparable. What God hath joined together let not man put asunder—nor seek to destroy.

SUMMARY.

Jesus Christ fulfills the Old Testament expectation of the One who was to come. He is the Messiah, the Prince to rule in righteousness, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. The prefiguring of his

life finds its counterpart in the story told in the gospels and the larger interpretation of the epistles. He has completed the Old Testament by joining to it the New Testament making it one book, the complete revelation of God.

QUIZ.

Restate the position accorded the Old Testament in paragraph 1. Give the outlines of the story of Jesus in paragraph 2. How does the Old Testament end? How does Jesus fulfil Gen. 3 : 15? How does he fulfil predictions of his coming? His sufferings and death? Memorize the Summary.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

Messiahship attested by fulfilled prophecy. The impossibility of explaining Jesus on other than divine claims.

The naturalness of the fulfilment attesting its genuineness.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Repeat facts already learned in previous Class drills.

CHAPTER XII.

THE OLD IN THE NEW.

THE USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT BY CHRIST AND THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITERS.

We have seen how Jesus Christ came and fulfilled in himself the prophecies and expectations of the Old Testament. He was the One by "prophets foretold," the One shadowed in types and symbols from the very beginning. The altar of the old dispensation, with its sacrificial offerings for sin, closed its functions when he made an offering for sin once for all. How did Christ and his followers look upon the Old Testament? If Jesus was what he claimed to be, and what we have discovered him to be, then his attitude toward the Old Testament should be carefully considered.

NOT DATES OR AUTHORSHIP.

1. Let us understand at the outset that our discussion does not involve either authorship or dates of books in the Old Testament. That is a matter we cannot enter upon here. The fact is, that, after all, the question of dates and authors has little to do with the great teachings of these writings. The use of the Old Testament, both by Christ and the writers of the New Testament, was without reference to authors. The Scriptures were regarded as the Word of

God, and only in incidental ways were the names of authors mentioned.

2. When it is said that "Moses in the law did write" (John 1:45); when it is said that, "beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27); when Jesus said that "all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:45);—when he so spake he was not deciding the authorship of these writings. His testimony on that point is not without weight, but when those citations are used as if their purpose was to name and locate the men who wrote them violence is done to them and they are wrested from their intention. Jesus is declaring his relationship to the whole Old Testament, showing that he fulfilled in himself the great prophecies concerning the Messiah.

3. The great purpose of New Testament quotations from the Old Testament is not necessarily to decide authorship, but to establish truth, and the reality of the teaching as from God. And the truth is the same, whether we accept a single author for the Pentateuch, or believe in a composite authorship; whether there were one or a dozen Isaiahs, and it is as easy to believe in a dozen as in two. The writer believes that Moses "did write," but this does not determine the authorship of a book or of a series of books. Either way the truth is the same—for Jesus stamped the books with his approval, and ac-

cepted their teachings as from God, as ever testifying to him and of him.

JESUS NOURISHED ON THE OLD TESTAMENT.

4. As a child Jesus was taught the Scriptures. His mother who was herself deeply imbued with the spirit of the Old Testament writers, as appears in her words in Luke 1 : 46-53, doubtless faithfully followed the injunction given in Deuteronomy 6 : 6, 7. He was a carefully taught child. His questions and answers to the teachers in the temple when he was twelve years old (Luke 2 : 46-49) showed his thorough training at the hands of his mother. His great battle in the temptation (Matt. 4 : 4-11) was fought with Old Testament quotations which he used as the words of God.

HE CONSIDERED IT A REVELATION FROM GOD.

5. All through his earthly life he looked upon the Old Testament, quoted from it, as the revelation of God which he had come to fulfil. He never regarded it as outworn, or superseded by another revelation. It was evident that he regarded it as a living book, ever to remain in the hearts and lives of his people. He did not regard it as a framework which was to fall away when he, the Messiah, appeared; rather did he look upon it as part of the great building of God, with the Son as the Chief Corner-stone. The building was an eternal building, and should never pass away. Lest any one should think that he had come to do away with the old law,

he said, "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets : I came not to destroy, but to fulfil" (Matt. 5 : 17).

It is evident that when Jesus so spake he had in mind all that Scripture we now know as the Old Testament.

THE LARGER FULFILMENT.

6. In this work of fulfilment he gave us a real interpretation of the Old Testament. There are some imperfect forms there, incomplete, awaiting a fuller revelation,—the revelation of Jesus Christ. The Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 5, 6, and 7, is perhaps the finest illustration of this fulfilment.

"Had the law forbidden murder? The prohibition rests ultimately on the principle of mutual love, which must exclude even the spirit of hatred. Had the law condemned adultery? That is but one application of the limited principle of purity, which must govern not merely action, but thought. Had the law prohibited perjury? Fidelity to an oath is but one small part of the universal duty of truth between man and man. Had the law enforced a rough equality of justice by way of restraining revenge? The true restraint of revenge is to be found in the conquest of evil by self-sacrifice. Had the law allowed a limitation of love to fellow-countrymen and friends? Human love is the reflection of divine love; divine love is universal, and henceforth human love must be universal too." (*Kirkpatrick*),

In this way Jesus linked himself to the Old Testament. He was the full blown flower of the Old Testament, but the flower can never be plucked from its stem.

7. So, from beginning to end, Jesus looked upon the Old Testament as the revelation of his Father; it was the voice of God speaking to men; reaching out with holy longing and expectation to him who was the final revelation of the Father—the Son of God.

THE WRITERS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

8. Just as Jesus turned to the Old Testament for testimony concerning himself, to convince the people of his day that he had come in the fulness of time, according to the Scriptures, so did the writers in the New Testament continually quote from the old Jewish writings. If one should go through the New Testament and underscore direct references to the Old, the result would be startling. Indeed if we should separate these quotations from the New Testament, the entire structure would fall to pieces.

9. The Old Testament was regarded as the great storehouse of Christian truth. In the minds of the writers and apostles God spake in the olden time to his people. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15 : 4). Referring to the history of the Israelites in the wilderness, Paul said, "Now these things happened unto them by way of ex-

ample, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come" (I Cor. 10:11). In Paul's last words to Timothy he makes reference to the "sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation" (read II Timothy 3:14-17). That God spake in the olden time is the first suggestion of the writer of the Hebrews (1:1).

QUOTATIONS.

10. The statement is made above that if the quotations from the Old Testament found in the New were removed the entire New Testament would fall to pieces. Let us see how true this is. We have room here to do no more than simply make the statements, but they can be verified by anyone who will take the trouble to search them out. Matthew has forty-seven quotations from the Old Testament; Mark has twenty-three; Luke twenty-three; John, fourteen; Acts, twenty-seven; Romans, fifty-six; First Corinthians, sixteen; Second Corinthians, nine; Galatians, nine; Ephesians, five; First Timothy, one; Second Timothy, one; Hebrews, thirty-one; James, four; First Peter, eight; Second Peter, one. The book of Revelation is so interwoven with Old Testament imagery that it is impossible to note or count references or quotations.

When we come to consider references to the Old Testament, which are not direct quotations, the result is as remarkable as the exact quotations. There are one hundred of these. There are eighty-three references in the New Testament to incidents recorded in the Old Testament.

CONCLUSIONS.

11. From all this it will be seen that the Old Testament cannot be separated from the New Testament, nor does the latter supersede the former, making it obsolete. It is part of the one great revelation of God, the unfolding of the divine mind, reaching to the glad fulfilment in Jesus Christ. The Old Testament calls for the New and the New answers to the Old. It is none other than the revelation of God, the gift of the Spirit to the world.

12. A few reflections upon these facts will help us. If Christ and the apostles looked upon the Old Testament as the revelation of God, we may not minimize it, under-rate its value, or make it subordinate to the later revelations.

The Old Testament is a living book, it is God's word speaking to the nations of the world, and its messages are for all time. We have greatly erred in giving it a second place in our thinking and study.

13. We should note its incompleteness—not as a revelation, but as a structure. The building is completed in Jesus Christ; and his seal upon the book makes it indeed a divine message to men.

SUMMARY.

The Old Testament is regarded by Jesus as the word of his Father. His use of it naturally seals the truth of the book. He was nourished on the Old Testament, used it as a weapon of defense, and gave it a large interpretation,

that of spirit and not of letter. The writers of the New Testament quoted extensively from the Old Testament. These quotations form the framework of the New Testament. We should not undervalue the Old Testament. Both Testaments belong together. They make the full and final revelation of God.

QUIZ.

Memorize the Summary. What was the purpose of Jesus in quoting the Old Testament? Is truth dependent upon authorship? How was Jesus trained as a child? Give the larger meaning to the law, as unfolded in the Sermon on the Mount. Why did New Testament writers quote from the Old Testament? How many quotations from the Old Testament are found in the New? What does this prove? What should be our attitude toward the Old Testament?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The new meanings of old laws. See Sermon on the Mount.

The Old Testament has a message for nations; the New Testament for the individual. Discover the difference, if possible.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Repeat facts already learned.

There are four hundred years between Malachi and Matthew. During this period the great philosophers of Greece and Rome lived and taught their great systems. Were they trying to answer the problem which only Christ could answer? Find the names of these philosophers.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BIBLE AND GOD.

We have considered the Bible as a book, and the Bible in the making. We have traced the story of its writing and growth to the completion of the Old and New Testaments. The Bible stands before us as the Word of God attested by fulfilled prophecy, the final revelation of God in spoken word, and in his full manifestation in Jesus Christ. Let us now turn to some of the teachings of the Bible. What is its message? What has it to say of God, of man and his redemption from sin? And what of man's future?

1. In the present study we consider the teachings of the Bible concerning God. We should know something of his character, and our relation to him. We assume his existence. Doubtless we were all born with a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, with whom we have to do. We should be thankful for our intuitions.

GOD THE CREATOR OF ALL.

2. The first sentence in the Bible is the most remarkable statement in literature. Unsurpassed in dignity, it declares the being of God, his pre-existence, and his relation to the universe as its sole cause. In the wonderful rec-

ord of creation that follows, the chief purpose is not to show how it was accomplished, but to declare once and forever that God did the work. The method of creation is beyond the knowledge of men. We cannot, in our present state, know *how* God made the world; but we do know that God made it. The confusions that have resulted from all attempts, superstitious or scientific, to define the creative method seem to forbid speculation in that line. Much has been read into the story which manifestly is not there. Our immediate purpose is to identify God with the origin of all things. The universe is not the result of chance. Before it, behind it, within it, is God—he made the world. “He spoke and it was done; He commanded and it stood fast” (Psalm 39:9). “The Lord that made the heaven and earth” (Psalm 121:2). “Of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things” (Rom. 11:36). “For thou didst create all things; and because of thy will they are and were created” (Rev. 4:11). There is much comfort in this teaching—more than is sometimes realized. Only as we know that all things are of God, and therefore in his control, can we rest in the assurance that to them that love God “all things work together for good.”

3. The imagination has filled the world with other gods. Many and peculiar were the notions of ancient peoples as to the creation of the world. And out of these “cosmogonies” grew idolatry of many kinds, degrading the

people, making them superstitious, giving free rein to their lusts and passions, and binding them in the darkness of ignorance. What a sublime note to sound over the troubled human sea, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"! In contrasting heathen idols with the God of heaven and earth Jeremiah said: "Thus shall ye say unto them, the gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, these shall perish from the earth, and from under the heavens. He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and by his understanding hath he stretched out the heavens. When he uttereth his voice there is a tumult of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings for the rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasuries. Every man is become brutish and is without knowledge; every goldsmith is put to shame by his graven image; for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, a work of delusion; in the time of their visitation they shall perish (Jeremiah 10 : 11-15).

GOD—WISE, POWERFUL, GOOD.

4. As the inspired writers look at the realms which God has made, they declare him to be all powerful and all wise: "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? For of him and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory

forever. Amen" (Romans 11:34, 36). On seeing the glories of creation, the psalmist sang: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1—read the first six verses). As far as we realize the purpose of creation, and discern the happy fitness of things to the life of man, we are ready to declare God to be not only all powerful and wise, but also good. The heavens have not only declared his glory, but they also reveal his goodness. "He hath made everything beautiful in his time" (Eccl. 3:11). "Thou art good and doest good" (Psa. 119:68). See also Psalm 25:8; 145:9.

GOD REVEALED IN JESUS.

5. So far as we have gone, we have not attempted to define God. This is difficult, yet we may reach certain conclusions which will help us to know him. Among many definitions, we venture this: God is a person, without limitations in wisdom or power; he loves, he wills, he moves in and through all things; nothing exists apart from him. So much the Hebrew world knew before the coming of Jesus Christ. Yet the revelation of God was not complete. The Christian conception of God is centered about the person of Jesus Christ. God can be known completely only in Jesus Christ. We accept unequivocally the statement of the New Testament that in Jesus Christ God was manifested in human flesh. As another has expressed it, "Jesus was God the Father un-

veiled." The whole movement of the book is toward the great outstanding facts that Jesus Christ has fulfilled all prophecy, completed the expectation of the Old Testament by the addition of the New Testament, revealing God,—being God himself come in human flesh; that is a natural thing to expect, seeing the kind of being man is, and his natural kinship to God.

6. We have already discovered that the Old Testament idea of God involved a revelation of him so complete that the Child which was to be born should be the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father (Isa. 9:6, 7). We have also seen how the New Testament realizes and completes this expectation. Our present purpose is to show how the revelation in the New Testament gives a clearer conception of God.

ALL THINGS MADE BY HIM.

7. Our knowledge of God centers in Jesus Christ. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him and without him was not anything made that hath been made" (John 1:1, 3; 1 Cor. 8:8). The coming of Jesus is interpreted as the coming of God in Matthew 1:23. Jesus declares himself to be identical with God: "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30); "He that seeth me seeth him that sent me" (John 12:45); "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 15:9). That Jesus was God manifested in the flesh

was also the burden of the apostles' teaching. The Son, "who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creations; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him. And he is before all things, and in him all things consist" (Col. 1 : 14-17); "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily" (Col. 2 : 9).

8. From the foregoing we come to the conclusion that our best knowledge of God comes to us through Jesus. Strange and mysterious as it all is, the blessed fact can be accepted, "God was in Christ." We will not allow the mystery to obscure the great and wonderful truth. The humanity of Jesus is gladly accepted, and the deity of Christ is also gratefully acknowledged.

GOD REVEALED THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

9. God manifested himself in various ways in the world before the full revelation in Jesus Christ. His present revelation is through his word and through his Holy Spirit. This manifestation of God through the Holy Spirit was fully made on the Day of Pentecost, since which time he has been among men, leading them, reproving them, convincing them of sin, witnessing to their acceptance with the Father and guiding them into the truth. The phrase or name, "God the Holy Spirit," has also the warrant of the scriptures. Consider the following

Scriptures; John 15 : 26; 16 : 7-11, 13-16; Heb. 10 : 15; In a very real way, yet entirely beyond the explanation of man, our Christian experience realizes God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

OUR FATHER.

10. The relation of God to men is fully revealed to us in Jesus Christ. He is our Father. The fatherhood of God is only hinted in the Old Testament. The New Testament is fairly charged with the blessed revelation. We are to address him in prayer as "Our Father" (Matt. 6 : 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 14, 15, 18, 26, 32). The entire Sermon on the Mount is a declaration of this paternal relationship. While in one sense God may be regarded as the Father of all, by reason of the fact that man was originally made in the divine image and that that image may, in the case of any living individual, be brought into a more perfect resemblance than it had in the innocent Adam, yet he is in the truest sense the Father of those only who are joined to him in Christ (John 8 : 42, 44; Rom. 9 : 8). The fact that God is our Father by our origin and our possibilities only adds to the dreadfulness of our separation from him by reason of sin. There is no comfort in the fact of Fatherhood to the wilfully wicked in the far country. As God the Father he loves the whole world and would have all men come to be saved. John 3 : 16; Ezek. 33 : 11; Gal. 2 : 20; Eph. 5 : 2; Titus 2 : 14; 3 : 4, 5; I John 4 : 7, 8, 10, 16. The great

commandment to us is that we shall love him with all our soul, mind and strength (Luke 10: 27).

OUR LOVE TO HIM.

11. Our love to God is born out of his love to us in revealing himself in Jesus Christ, in the sacrificing of himself for a sinful world (I John 8: 10). We can never love him simply because we are commanded to do so. Genuine love does not come by compulsion. We may adore God for his works in nature, but our admiration may be tinged with doubts of his goodness as we sometimes see the destruction wrought by natural forces. But in the realm of grace where in Jesus we come into the very heart of God, we learn to love him, and are ready to cry out, "I will love thee, O Lord my strength" (Psalm 18: 1).

12. How superb is this revelation of God in Jesus Christ! How it is illumined by the Book we love and own as the word of God. Here is no god of evil, with vindictive spirit looking upon his creation, waiting to pounce upon his creatures at the moment of their wrong doing. Rather is he our Father, who pities us as a father pities his children (Psalm 103: 13), and who longingly seeks his wayward ones who have gone astray. Our God is the Shepherd who leaves the ninety and nine and goes to the wilderness to find the lost sheep. Ours is the Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. Let us love him—more and more!

SUMMARY.

God is the creator of all things. He is in the universe and above it. He is all powerful, wise and good. We know God best in Jesus Christ. His revelation of himself in Jesus reveals him as our Father and Saviour. He loves us and yearns for our salvation. In the Holy Spirit he is seeking to draw the world unto himself.

QUIZ.

Memorize the Summary. What does the first verse in Genesis declare? What does a look at nature declare God to be? How is Jesus identified with creation? What does this prove Jesus to be? What did Jesus declare himself to be? From the knowledge we have of Jesus, what may we conclude as to the character of God? Why should we love him?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The naturalness of a revelation of God in man; no other revelation would answer—why?

The present revelation in the Holy Spirit. The instrument he uses—the Bible.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Occupations of some Biblical writers: Moses was a statesman; David a poet and king; Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel were prophets; Matthew, a taxgatherer; Luke a physician; Peter and John were fishermen; Paul a scholar and missionary.

Aug 8

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BIBLE AND MAN.

1. There are many living creatures on the earth which owe their being to a common source. Not one of them is the result of accident. There was a beginning somewhere, sometime. No matter what theory of the universe one may hold, there must have been a beginning of things somewhere, sometime. At the beginning is—God the creator. If he is the being we concluded him to be in the last chapter, his creative work must have been intelligently ordered. The universe is not a product of chance, nor has it been conducted by caprice or left subject to accident.

2. Among the creatures of the earth is one,—part of the earth yet entirely distinct from it—which history calls “man.” There has been much discussion as to his origin and nature. The only being interested in the discussion is man himself, for reasons which are apparent. We cannot enter upon a review of the various theories concerning the origin of man; we are interested mainly in the biblical treatment of him. What has the Bible to say concerning man?

MAN IN GOD'S IMAGE.

3. In connection with the wonderful story of

creation in the first chapter of Genesis we are met with the striking words, "And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him" (Genesis 1:27). There is nothing stated here which implies his connection with other orders of beings. He does not seem to have come up out of a lower order of creation. With the Bible before us we cannot regard man in his beginnings as other than a being endowed with life and faculties different from all other creatures. The war over the simian (ape) origin of man has waged earnestly, and strong minds have been found on both sides. Perhaps the safest conclusion to be reached at this period of the world is that declared by the late Professor Virchow, one of the most intelligent scientists that ever lived, as he summed the whole argument concerning the "missing link." He said that the words "Not Proven" must be written over the whole argument.

4. Clearly the Bible declares man's beginning to have been a direct creative act of God. It can hardly be said that the declaration applies merely to man's moral nature, for that would be a broken note in this whole song of creation. Man is an animal product; he also is a spiritual being. We know nothing of a time when he lacked soul or conscience, or was incapable of developing them. The following quotation from Dr. Strong seems to cover the case most sensibly: "Apart from the direct agency of God, the view that man's physical system is descended by natural generation from some ancestral simian

form, can be regarded only as an irrational hypothesis. Since the soul, then, is an immediate creation of God, and the forming of man's body is mentioned by the Scripture writer in direct connection with this creation of the Spirit, man's body was in this sense an immediate creation also" (*Systematic Theology*, 1902 edition, page 236). In a somewhat modified manner, while not antagonizing the idea of evolution, the following by Dr. Clarke also comes close to the biblical idea: "Although we may not be able clearly to trace the line of distinction between man and other animals, the distinction is unquestionable, and resides in the qualities of the human spirit. Even between the lowest of men and the highest of lower animals there is a vast interval; for man, even at the lowest, possesses powers that can be developed, as experience shows, into the full life of the spirit. We may grant that like the principle of life, the principle of mind expressed in man finds genuine, though partial, expression in the animal world below him; yet it is true that man is unique in spite of his community with the inferior world, and stands on a plane of essential separateness, by virtue of qualities that are all his own" (*An Outline of Christian Theology*, page 191).

WHAT "IMAGE" IMPLIED.

5. We begin with man, then, where we find him, at the beginning of things as pictured in Genesis. There are certain natural inferences

in these scriptures which are fundamental. Whether we regard the setting of the first few chapters of Genesis as historical or symbolic, the underlying truth is evident. To dispute it, is to make the whole subsequent story of the Bible as regards man and his history through the world untrustworthy and useless. What are we to understand by the plain indications of the story?

He was created in God's image. That is, he was endowed with thinking power, with a will free within certain limits, spiritual faculties, and the ability to express himself fully in words and deeds. In so far, man by nature is God-like. This is the exalted expression of the Psalmist in Psalm 8: 4-8: "For thou hast made him but little lower than God, and crownest him with glory and honor," etc. One of the most inspiring things ever said of man is this assertion of his creation in God's image. The Maker himself had a high estimate of its significance. He regarded murder with peculiar abhorrence because "in the image of God made he man" (Genesis 9: 6). It is enough to say that no other earthly creature has these endowments. There was an evident purpose in the creation of man in God's image. Man was made for God—and God ultimately revealed himself in man. He came to us in or through no other creature. "Thou madest us for thyself," is the heart cry of Augustine. "The Lord's inheritance is his people." He is the Father of men; creation asserts that stupendous truth (see preceding chapter).

6. Man was to be fruitful, multiply and subdue the earth. He was to have dominion over all the earth (Genesis 1 : 28). In spite of the calamity into which he plunged (which we consider in the next chapter), he has wonderfully fulfilled the great command he received in the beginning. There is nothing too hard for him to attempt. Every day he is subduing the earth, harnessing its forces, making it to serve his iron will and indomitable energy. The history of man is a wonderful response to the Genesis command.

HIS MORAL ATTITUDE.

7. He was an upright and innocent being (Eccl. 7 : 29). His native inclinations were toward the good. This idea is involved in the imaging of God in man. In his best state he becomes like God, in character and spirit. He is made capable of having fellowship with God. The intimations in these early chapters are that he had such relationship and converse. These are the evident underlying teachings of the story.

EVIDENCE OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

8. In all of these things there is an evidence aside from the Bible history which should be mentioned. It is man's own consciousness witnessing to the truth of these things. There is something within him drawing him Godward—in the exercise of his powers, in the movements of his spirit. He is other than the brute

creation; he may become brutish in his conduct, he never can become a brute in his nature. *That* ever cries out against his degradation. He is resistlessly borne on the tide of investigation, seeking to know more, to gain more; even the apparently useless north pole lures him—and he will never be satisfied until everything on the earth is under his feet. He was sent forth to conquer, and the voice still cries in his heart.

HIS DESTINY.

9. As regards his destiny man is also like God. Having been created in his image, with the powers or qualities we have defined above, there never will come a time when man is not. That is to say, inherently, by his very nature, he is immortal. Immortality is not a gift of God to man; no religious act makes him immortal; his is an immortal nature, since in the nature or image of God he was created. While it is often said that immortality is scarcely traceable in the Old Testament, such omission is no evidence either way. A self-evident truth needs no argument or reiteration. If man is the creature he is stated to be in Genesis, which is attested by history and common human consciousness, man is immortal; that is, he is immortal if God is immortal, for he is made in the divine image. In the New Testament Jesus assumed it, just as he assumed other fundamental, natural traits in man. He illuminated immortality—he disclosed its possibilities—possibilities of glory or shame.

The resurrection of man into endless life is the great undertone of the Bible; it breathes itself through the heart of Job (19 : 26); it sings itself in the Psalms (17 : 15); Isaiah tells it (26 : 19); it is proclaimed by Jesus Christ (Matt. 22 : 31; Luke 14 : 14; John 5 : 28; 11 : 23).

RACE RELATIONSHIP.

10. Every human being is related to every other human being. We are members of a world-wide family, and by no process of reasoning nor by any variations of condition can we be separated from it. We have come from a single pair (Acts 17 : 26), and thus owe to each other a brotherly love and service. Culture, pride, position, wealth, and sometimes force, have led some men to think of themselves as separate and apart from the rest of the world, but the distinctions are fictitious. "Have we not all one Father; hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother" (Mal. 2 : 10)? "For none of us liveth to himself" (Rom. 14 : 7).

11. The New Testament conception of man is naturally exalted regarding his body as significant in its possibilities. He is a temple of God—or should so regard himself (I Cor. 3 : 16); this temple must not be defiled (same, v. 17); man should yield himself fully to God (Rom. 12 : 1).

Here, then, is man, created in God's image, made "a little lower than God," fitted for endless life with God. Yet he has fallen from his high estate. What has happened to him?

SUMMARY.

Creation is not the result of accident. Man was made in the image of God; he has mind, will, power to act; he is Godlike in nature, and is therefore supreme in God's creation, and master of it. In his best state he becomes like God. This is attested by human experience. Man is immortal since God is immortal. The Bible declares it, Jesus assumed it, the resurrection assures it. Man, then, is a creature of God, like him, made for his glory. God should dwell in him.

QUIZ.

Memorize the Summary. What is meant by "created in the image of God." What does it not mean? Why is man regarded as immortal? What does he become in his "best state"? What does man's consciousness declare, and what is its pleading? What is his relation to the race? What are his obligations? What does the New Testament teach concerning man's body?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The triumphs of man in subduing the earth.
The race-obligation on every man.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Repeat facts already learned.

Palestine was originally called Canaan. It was the land of "promise" to Abraham and his seed.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BIBLE AND SIN.

There is a story told in the third chapter of Genesis which has wrought itself into the consciousness of men in all ages as being in some sense an explanation for the evil which we find in the world. We do not need to discuss the presence of evil, nor seek by foolish processes of reasoning to argue it out of the world, or say that it is simply a wrong mode of thinking. Evil is here—a present, oppressive, universal fact. From the hour of his coming man does not know a time when evil was not rampant in the world. It is a great mystery—the mystery of evil; but it is an awful fact in the experience of man. How came this blight upon the world? Where did it begin? Why did God permit it to enter the beautiful world he had made? The third chapter of Genesis furnishes a foundation for some explanation of this calamity. The whole story, which ever way we regard it, is strikingly true to certain fundamental facts in the nature and history of man. Let us consider some of the natural movements which led to the “fall of man.”

MAN CREATED “PERFECT”—IN NATURE.

1. The Scriptures imply that man was created “perfect.” But it is evident that this

perfection was a perfection of nature; he was *innocent*. This does not imply perfection in attainment. He had to *grow*. He was a child-man, perfect in nature, but lacking development. That development was to come to him through struggle. He had to struggle with the elements about him—and subdue them; he also had to deal with his free nature within, with which he was endowed of God. In his war with the elements about him, "subduing the earth," he would develop his intellectual and physical powers, and so "find himself." In his struggle with his inner free nature, he would become a strong spiritual being. Here is the natural use of what is termed temptation, in its beginnings. There is a moral use in temptation.

TEMPTATION.

2. Temptation is no sin. Temptation leads to virtue if it is resisted and overcome. So temptation is a test. Man had other tests than the moral test. He was tested in his mental and physical powers, as he went forward to subdue the earth. But his great test was the moral test. The story in Genesis indicates that he failed in his moral nature, which reacted on all his nature, because the soul is the principal factor in the human organism. Thus he lost fellowship with God and even attempted to hide from him (Gen. 3 : 9, 10).

We are enabled, in this view of the matter, to declare that God is not the author of sin. Man's development came in the line of his testing.

That he chose the downward path was his fault, and not God's.

SOME CONCLUSIONS FROM THE FOREGOING.

3. There are some things which are to be concluded from this view of the fall of man—or the entrance of sin:

(1.) There are those who speak of sin as if it were the peculiar product of Scripture teaching. The Bible did not create sin, any more than a map makes a country. It simply reveals sin in its beginnings, its course, and its consequences.

(2.) There is no reasonable explanation of sin outside of the Scriptures.

(3.) In this view sin is not traceable to man's lower nature; there is no shifting of responsibility from the free will of man to the animalism of the brute. Only man is capable of sinning, since he is the only being in the world possessed of a conscience. The effort to trace sin in man back to the coarse elements in brute creation is morally weak, belittling to mankind, and dishonoring to God, seeing that the Bible declares his judgment on the work of his hands as "very good." There is no moral quality in the action of brutes. There can be no moral obligation in man if his sin is the result of the brute which is still in him. History, common sense, and jurisprudence accept no such excuse.

(4.) Sin is not primarily a bodily difficulty. Only a vitiated will makes a vitiated body. Sin is not a "blameless disease" of the body,

any more than a sick body is a sign of sin. Illness has not, necessarily, a moral quality, unless it is directly bound up with the sin of the will.

From all this we come to another conclusion concerning man's nature :

(5.) Man has a dual nature; that is, he is soul and body. There are those who contend for a three-fold nature, but the evidence of human consciousness, the history of man in the large, and the trend of the Bible, is toward the two-fold nature of man. The body is of the earth, belongs to it, and will ultimately return to it; the spirit is from God. The human struggle is not the subjugation or crucifixion or repression of the body; but the struggle is by means of the spirit to bring all its members up to a normal life. Sin is the action of the free spirit of man bringing into slavery the body in which it dwells. It has its beginnings in man, and operates either through temptation from without or weakness within. Any teaching that tends to weaken or excuse man's responsibility for sin, is so far vicious and immoral.

4. The whole history of mankind is proof of the truth of the third chapter of Genesis. The sense of a "fall" enters into the consciousness of all men when they contemplate the broad gap that lies between their grand moral possibilities and their repeated moral failures.

SIN—PERSONAL AND RACIAL.

5. As we leave the story of Genesis 3, we are met with some very clear statements concern-

ing sin and its effects on the world, and its ultimate penalty. The sin of the world is traceable in its origin to the story in Genesis. Sin is therefore regarded as both personal and racial. "By one man sin entered the world" (Rom. 5 : 12). "As in Adam all die" (2 Cor. 15 : 22). "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3 : 23). As Adam is related to the race, being father of it, by natural transmission every individual of the race inherits the tendency to sin—a tendency, not a compulsion. In this limited sense we all fell in Adam. While we are "by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2 : 3), we are responsible only for our own sin, and not for the sins of our forefathers. As Dr. Denney has remarked, no man is punished for the sins of his grandfather until he makes them his own.

SIN—AGAINST GOD.

6. We are now ready to define more clearly the nature of sin, as given in the Bible. It is more than a human mistake; it is more than a violation of one's own nature. It is a wrong against God. The intimation given in Genesis 3 is that it began in a choice of one's own will as against the known will of God. It is a violation of the holy law of God: "Sin is lawlessness" (I John 3 : 4). It is obeying the Evil One in preference to the Lord God: "He that committeth sin is of the devil" (I John 3 : 8). Every thing contrary to good is sin: "All unrighteousness is sin" (I John 5 : 17).

7. There are three ways in which men commonly sin; against themselves, against others, against God. In the final analysis all sin is against God. One cannot sin against his nature without sinning against God, for he bears God's nature. One cannot sin against another without sinning against God, for our brother also possesses the same nature. In the experience of David, in the darkest hour of his life, he sinned against himself, Bathsheba and Uriah. But when he comes face to face with God, in confession, he sees that the wrong was not human, but in deed and in truth sin against God. "Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight" (Psalm 51 : 4).

8. The measure of sin is according to one's light. Indeed the final judgment on sin is not so much on sin itself as it is a refusal of the light which has come to guide man out of sin (John 3 : 19).

DEATH PENALTY.

9. The penalty for sin, as revealed in the Bible, is clear and decisive. The penalty attached to disobedience in Genesis was death. This did not mean physical death, which is evident from the fact that the first parents did not immediately die. Yet the word was: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:17). Physical death was not a result of sin then; nor can we say that sin brings physical death today. Man was not

physically immortal. "Death" then meant separation from God, which is shown by their being driven from the garden. These are great truths, which are borne out all through the scriptures. "The soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezek. 18:20); "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23); So the "death" was spiritual, and not physical.

Nor did death mean extinction of being. The separated were still alive, yet they were under the sentence of banishment. It was an eternal separation, an endless death, away from God, away from good, away from home, from the Father's house.

SATAN.

10. In the view here presented, sin was not in the world until man by disobedience fell—and so, "sin entered into the world." How about the Tempter, Satan? We know little about Satan, save that he is a tremendous personal power in the world. This much may be worth while: Satan fell, as man fell—by opposing his will to God's will. Being of the nature of angelic beings, he possessed great wisdom and strength, which were not taken from him (2 Cor. 2:11)—his was also a nature like unto God's. Being thrust from communion and fellowship with God he became the implacable enemy of God, and in the testing or temptation of man he urged a violation of the command of God, and he tempted man not as a test merely, but to induce him to violate the divine

command. Man was responsible for his own sin, though he was urged to his fall by Satan. Satan is in the world, and man by reason of his manifest working with the evil one, has accomplished the fearful havoc we see on every side. We are either workers together with God for the salvation of the world, or we are allied with Satan, being indeed "children of wrath," helping to sink the world in eternal misery. Hence, sin is committed when he listens to the voice of the Tempter and yields to the enticements of his own enkindled lusts. In either case man is responsible for his sin (James 1:14).

SIN'S DOWNWARD PATH.

11. Such is the story of man's fall through disobedience. As he opened the door to his own way, choosing that in preference to the way of God, he led the human family upon its downward course, which has made human history so sad and so dark. We will not be misled into fanciful discussions as to the moral uses of sin; rather will we consider the moral growth made possible through the resistance of wrong and the persistence of good in the world. Let no man do evil in order to develop his moral character; the persistent and deliberate choice of good will do that. Great is the mystery of evil, and we haven't said all that may be said concerning it; but our conclusions are true to the Book. And still humanity moves downward, away from God. Is there no remedy for sin? Is there no healing for the sore of the world? We shall find the answer in the next chapter.

SUMMARY.

Man was created perfect in nature, but he had to be developed. His moral and intellectual development came through testing, or temptation. But temptation is not sin. Man yielded to wrong and so fell away from God—and wandered off into sin. Sin is a wilful transgression of God's law. It passes on to the race and so becomes universal—"in Adam all die." Primarily all sin is against God. The penalty for sin is endless separation from God.

QUIZ.

Memorize Summary. What is meant by man being created "perfect"? Define temptation—what is its use? How did man fall? Why do we hold the will responsible for sin? How did Adam's sin affect the race? Why is all sin a wrong against God? What was the penalty for sin? What does death mean?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The difference between innocence and virtue?

How sin may be avoided.

How persistence in the right creates a stronger character than indulgence in the wrong.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Repeat books of Bible with natural divisions.

The land of the Bible is called Palestine. It is situated in Asia Minor, bounded on the east by the Jordan River on the west by the Mediterranean Sea, on the south by Egypt, on the north by Syria. Get a map.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BIBLE AND REDEMPTION.

Part I.

We have seen man created in the image of God. He is not God, but is like him in nature, in thought, will, disposition. We have also noted his rectitude in the beginning. How long he continued in obedience to God, in holy communion and relationship, we cannot tell. But he *began* right. We have learned how he started in the downward path, away from God—plunging his posterity into ruin. Man fell. Sin is the awful tragedy of human life. Man is not only covered with guilt, but he is oppressed with a sense of his own helplessness. The sense of separation from God and good; the consciousness of guilt, the feeling of helplessness—these have pressed man to the earth. He needs moral cleansing. He needs more than pardon, he needs restoration to God's favor; more, he needs power to withstand and overcome evil.

Redemption accomplishes this mighty task. What is its message?

SACRIFICE AN OLD INSTITUTION.

1. Primarily, the great work of redemption is to bring man back to God, to restore the early relationship between man and God. The pen-

alty for sin was death—separation from God. From the very beginning the idea of sacrifice is part of man's life. How it came there we cannot say, nor is it worth while to speculate upon the story. Many pleasing fancies have been indulged in to explain the history, but these fancies are seldom borne out by fair Scripture inference. There are two altars of sacrifice that stand at the beginning of man's history as recorded in the Bible. They express this inner sense, or feeling, in humanity, that some sacrifice is needed as an offering for sin.

2. Whatever the significance of Cain's and Abel's offerings or sacrifices, one thing stands out clear and distinct—that the sacrifice required a certain attitude of mind on the part of the one who offered it, which determined its acceptance, or made it available in the work of redemption. So we are told that "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts" (Hebrews 11: 4). There are two possible reasons for the rejection of Cain's offering: first, that Cain was evil at heart, which is evident from the history (see Genesis 4: 7); second, that in his offering there was no sacrificial shedding of blood. The offering of Abel was an offering in humiliation and acknowledgement of sin. In the offering of Cain there was an element of pride—a clear departure from the true spirit of worship.

SACRIFICE WAS AN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SIN.

3. Be this as it may, and we cannot determine the matter for a certainty, the fact remains that sacrificial offerings in worship, in acknowledgment of sin, in an offering for sin, date back as far as the history of man as a sinner. It is natural to suppose that the idea of sacrifice was some way instilled into the mind of man, as he thought of his relations to God. God led him to an appreciation of what his "fall" meant. There was need of reconciliation as soon as he fell.

These sacrifices were invariably life-sacrifices, offered in the hope that by their acceptance the sinner was pardoned and restored to the divine favor. Man was ever seeking after God, and in his sacrifices and offerings he hoped that God would come near and accept the life offered up, in place of the forfeited life of the suppliant. It was so in the early day. Every man was his own priest.

4. We soon come upon a series of offerings, in which many joined in worship about a common altar upon which was an offering for the sins of more than one. So a priesthood grew, in which order certain men made offerings for the sins of the people. We cannot trace the order of offerings among the chosen people. It is enough to say that in that old "economy" great attention was given to the sacrifice—the animals were to be spotless, without blemish, the firstlings of the flock. The establishment of sacrifices and offerings among the Jews as they emerged from

Egyptian slavery was under the special direction of God, as the whole Levitical story clearly implies.

THE HOPE IN SACRIFICE WAS REDEMPTION.

5. The one clear teaching in all these sacrifices was *redemption, forgiveness, restoration*. When the smoke of the altar ascended to the heavens it was an appeal to God for pardon. There was also a striking significance in the use of the scapegoat. On the day when the sin offering was made, two goats were taken; by lot one was offered in sacrifice for sin, the other was sent into the wilderness, bearing away the sins of the people (See Lev. 16). The two-fold idea of redemption was typified—that of an offering for sin and its pardon, and the removal of sin—bearing it away from the presence of man and of God. Such is the story of sacrifice in the early day. It began at the beginning and seemed to grow naturally out of man's sense of sin, its awful guilt and the necessity of its pardon and removal, in order to a restoration to God's favor.

6. God directed these sacrifices unquestionably with a view of teaching man certain fundamental lessons: His own righteousness, the "sinfulness of sin," the natural penalty which followed it—*death!* Since this was the penalty for sin, the great purpose of God was unfolding, leading to a Sacrifice which should be complete, satisfactory, fulfilling all law, establishing his own righteousness, yet saving man from the

penalty of his sin, and restoring him to communion with God his Father.

A COMPLETE SACRIFICE SUGGESTED.

7. It was evident that some better way than the offering of bulls and goats should be the final method by which atonement should be made for sin. Offerings of bulls and goats could not make a complete atonement—though God accepted them for the time, because they were a foreshadowing of the perfect Sacrifice to come. In the very nature of the case, since man had fallen in sin and turned away from God, it was meant that man himself should make an atonement. Yet no man could make an atonement, seeing that he himself was a sinner. He could not atone for his own sin and certainly could not atone for the sins of others.

8. In view of man's helplessness God provided a way by which man could be pardoned, restored, redeemed, even *justified*, cleared from the great transgression. This could only be done by an atonement made by a member of the fallen race, yet who himself was unfallen. The wonderful story deepens in interest and mystery when we learn that God became man for this very purpose. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (II Corinthians 5 : 19). So the Lamb of God, the Son of God, became the Substitute, himself becoming the Sacrifice for sin.

THE MISSION OF JESUS.

9. The mission of Jesus Christ in the world

was *redemption*.) He came to seek and to save the lost, to make atonement for them, and declare to the world that God the Father (whom man by disobedience had outraged) loved, and loved so strongly that he came to give *his* life as a ransom, as a substitute, gathering up in himself all the sacrifices of the world, and become the One Sacrifice, opening the way for the race to return to fellowship, communion, full relationship, which had been broken by the fall. This was Jesus' own interpretation of his mission. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up" (John 3:15); "And the bread which I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world" (John 6:51); "And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things . . . be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mark 8:31). Also Mark 9:12, 31; 10:33, 34, 45; Luke 9:31.

LOVE SENT JESUS.

10. It is a profound and affecting spectacle,— God, in Christ, seeking and saving the lost. At once we are impressed with the motive of God in coming after his fallen and wandering children. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). God always loved his children. He loved man in his unfallen state. "He was God's child and God was his Father, and God's delight was in him, and God's hopes were cen-

tered upon him, and God's world was given him for a home, and God's banner over him was love He [man] is dear to God now in that sinful state which inevitably exposes him to the wrath of holiness. Men have changed; God has not changed. God loved him then, God loves him now." (*The Gospel of the Divine Sacrifice*, page 19.)

11. We need to keep this fact of God's love constantly before us. It is the keynote of Redemption. It is true that God's wrath is "revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of man" (Rom. 1:18). To assume any other attitude toward sin would be unholy. No measure of love could make God do wrong—that would be unholy love, which cannot be thought of in God. No, his wrath condemns, his love yearns, himself he gives in an offering for sin; so his love has unlimited sway, while his righteousness remains unimpaired. It is only on this basis, though differing in degree, that a man can deal with his own prodigal son. In the presence of God's wrath against sin, we read, "But God commendeth his own love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through him" (Rom. 5:9).

CHRIST THE EXPRESSION OF GOD'S LOVE.

12. So Jesus Christ came, the expression of the love of God to the fallen race, taking upon himself the penalty for sin, and in himself mak-

ing atonement for the race. It was a voluntary offering, prompted only by love. There was no other compulsion but the compulsion of love (John 10 : 17, 18; Phil. 2 : 8). It was holy love, in that it accomplished complete redemption, fulfilling the law of God.

THE LAW'S DEMAND MET BY CHRIST.

13. Every demand of the law was met by Jesus Christ. "God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit" (Rom. 8 : 3, 4, Am. Version, marginal renderings). "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (II Corinthians 3 : 21).

VICARIOUS SUFFERING.

14. We should also keep in mind the great difference between suffering *with* men and suffering *for* men. One is sympathetic suffering. Tissot's vision represents Christ sitting with the dejected man and woman in the shattered cathedral, suffering with them, a companion in their misery. But sympathetic suffering is of little comfort to man. Christ suffered *for* man; his was vicarious and not sympathetic suffering, merely. He took man's place, suffered in his stead. He died for man.*

"We must therefore maintain, as a simple induction of Scripture facts, that the death of Christ is a vicarious offering, provided by God's love for the purpose of satisfying an internal demand of the divine holiness and of removing an obstacle in the divine mind to the renewal and pardon of sinners."—Strong, p. 397.

COMPLETE JUSTIFICATION.

15. The great victory in redemption is not only the restoration of man, but his justification as well. He who accepts the results of redemption through Jesus Christ is "justified," cleared from the penalty of the law; his debt is paid; he has had a Substitute, who took his punishment upon himself. "Who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Peter 2:24). This "justification" is so complete that it results in a relation between God and the accepted sinner as complete as though there never had been antagonism between them. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in loving kindness. He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:18, 19).

FINAL SACRIFICE FOR THE WHOLE WORLD.

16. The race died in Christ, as Christ died for the race—so there can be no more sacrifice for sin (Heb. 10:12). Jesus died for the whole world. "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world" (I John 2:2). "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men" (Titus 2:11). It is a complete redemption, leading to the par-

don, restoration and justification of him who receives it. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ; that ye should be joined to another, even to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. 7:4).

SOME ILLUSTRATIONS.

17. Every attempt at illustration in this matter of redemption wrought by Christ, is likely to fail in full application. Yet we may attempt it for the sake of throwing some natural light upon the wonderful theme. There is a story told of the time of the civil war, in which a man was drafted for service. He did not feel able to go, so he provided a substitute, who was accepted. It so happened that this substitute died in the war. In due time another draft was made upon this same man. He pleaded that he could not be taken, since he was a dead man. His substitute had taken his place. His claim was accepted.

18. In a school once upon a time, there was considerable disorder during recesses. Stones were often thrown, and windows broken. The teacher failing in precept, had no other course but penalty in which to deal with the evil. She stated that the next offense would be met with a severe flogging of the offender. Things went along much better for a time, but one day a stone came crashing through the windows. It was a solemn time for all. After some investigation, it was discovered that the smallest, poor-

est boy in school had thrown the stone. The command to come forward for punishment was imperative, though the teacher's heart ached sorely. As he was urged to take off his coat a cry of horror rose from the school—he had no other garment to cover his poor body. Suddenly there was a movement in the school, a strong boy came forward and said, "Don't whip him—don't whip him; he's too poor, too little. Whip me—for him!" He took the punishment, the culprit was freed, law was satisfied, righteously maintained—and the guilty one was *justified*, for his substitute fulfilled the law!

HIS GREAT WORK.

19. As we turn to the application of Redemption, its practical bearings on human experience, we may look again at the wonderful work wrought by Jesus Christ. We may well consider the life he lived, the beautiful words he spoke, the splendid example of a perfect manhood, an ideal for us all to follow. We stand with faces uplifted in admiration. *We would be like Him!*

20. But our love is kindled by something other than that matchless life. It is because of the work he wrought, the sacrifice he made, the full and complete redemption he accomplished. He died, that we may not die. He lives, and we shall live also. We are saved, not by his matchless life, but by his sacrificial death. Here is the path of humility, here is the "glory" that fadeth not away. It is not imitation of his life;

it is submission by faith to his death, that makes possible a true life in Him.

SUMMARY.

The great work of redemption is to bring man back to God. Sacrifice is as old as the race, and always implied acknowledgment for sin and hope of pardon. There were two elements in Hebrew sacrifices—pardon through expiation, and the bearing away of sin. God's love sent Jesus to be the one complete sacrifice for sin, by which man is forgiven, restored, redeemed. Christ died for the world, fulfilling the law of God and opening the way for man's full and complete redemption. Our chief glory is in the work Jesus wrought on the cross.

QUIZ.

What has always been the meaning of sacrifice? Give the difference between Cain's and Abel's offerings. What was the hope in sacrifice? Tell the story of the scape-goat. What did the old sacrifices prefigure? What was the mission of Jesus? What was the motive in sending Christ? How were the demands of law met in Jesus' sacrifice? What does justification mean? Illustrate it—see paragraphs 17, 18. What was Christ's greatest achievement? Why should we glory in it?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The love of God as shown in Christ.

Christ's death a death for sin—differing from all other deaths.

Make an illustration of justification.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Repeat books of the Bible—and give Division.
Bound Palestine.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE BIBLE AND REDEMPTION.

Part II.

It is a growingly wonderful story. We cannot fathom the depths of it. Man fallen, man redeemed through the Man Christ Jesus, the infinite possibilities for man in redemption—these are things which angels desire to look into (I Pet. 1:12), and toward which the best thinking of the world has been directed; yet no one has been able to fully declare the glorious message. But we can rejoice in the precious truth even when we may not understand its fullest meanings.

Looking at the “scheme” of redemption as finally completed in Jesus Christ, and before we come to the practical application of it, we may ask how the history of man accords with it? Is redemption a speculative theory, or a fact of living and vital interest to man?

THE UNIVERSAL SENSE OF SIN.

1. In our study on sin we freely discussed the outstanding fact that all men are sinners. That chapter (XV) may well be read in connection with this theme. We go beyond its discussion to call attention to the fact that man universally has a sense of sin. For any man to deny it is

not only to deceive himself but to make God a liar (I John 1 : 8,10). Generally speaking, men acknowledge their sinfulness. The keener this sense of sin the deeper the sense of guilt, and the growing sense of helplessness. We have all gone astray, and unless help comes from some quarter outside of ourselves, there is little hope for us. This sin-feeling is not brought out by specific acts of sin, but by the sense of sin-nature; by nature we are sinners. The fall of Adam has naturally involved the whole race.

PARDON NOT ENOUGH.

2. Man also instinctively feels that pardon isn't sufficient—either in our dealings with God, or with one another. The "pardoning power" is rarely exercised unless some change is assured in the one pardoned, which pardon by itself can never accomplish. Merely to have sin forgiven is a redemption that must ever be incomplete. David discovered that in his forgiveness of Absalom. So the redemption of Christ was to the full liberty of the sons of men. "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly" (John 10 : 10), said Jesus, in connection with his astonishing conversation where he declared that he was giving his life for the sheep. Human experience has proven this great result in human redemption—pardon, freedom, power. Sin is not only forgiven, but the blood of Jesus cleanseth us from all sin—that is, moral cleansing follows forgiveness. There is this peculiar power in the gospel of re-

demption which is attested by human experience: the blotting out of sin, and the impartation of a new life. So the saying of Paul has great significance, "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation", or, a new creature.

This, in a few sentences, indicates the sweep of redemption. Let us consider somewhat more in detail the method of redemption, its application to men.

REDEMPTION IS UNLIMITED.

3. Jesus Christ died for all men—for that all have sinned. So redemption is unlimited. If he died for all men it naturally follows that all men can be saved. It does not follow that, Christ having died for all men, therefore all men will be saved. The Voice is gone to the ends of the earth, calling all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17 : 30 ; II Peter 3 : 9). But all men do not repent. It is a significantly sad fact that for some Jesus will have died in vain. For man stands before the redemption wrought by Christ just as he stood before the command of God in the very beginning—*he is free to choose!* His free nature will never be violated.

NOT ALL ACCEPT REDEMPTION.

4. It was the constant grief of Jesus that men would not come to him for life. He pleaded, he wept over them, he besought them—but they "would not". "Many are called" to the enjoyment of, and participation in, the great salvation wrought by Christ—"but few are

chosen;" that is, few will permit themselves to be chosen, they refuse to surrender to the will of God. The shining words of the gospel are: "Whosoever will;" but some will not. Those who receive him become the sons of God, but not all receive him. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock;" but some refuse to open the door. No man is forced into the Kingdom—that were a violation of his free nature, which God cannot accomplish. Here is the helpfulness and willingness of God—here is also the helplessness of God!

THE METHOD OF REDEMPTION.

What is the method of this redemption wrought by Jesus Christ? It has already been intimated, but we should enter more fully into the matter.

5. By submission to the will of God. This involves repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ. We say repentance *from* sin, for repentance is not merely "sorrow for," but "turning from." At once we see how the benefits of this great redemption are contingent or dependent upon man's own will. He must submit to God; he must turn from sin; he must submit to the will of God, and accept salvation in Jesus Christ.

THE IMMEDIATE RESULTS.

6. There are results accompanying such action on the part of man that are tremendous in their meaning. We have peace with God

(Rom. 5 : 1). We are freed from condemnation (Rom. 8 : 1). We have full redemption (Eph. 1 : 7, 8). We have everlasting life (John 3 : 16; 5 : 24). Man is not in process of being saved; but he is in process of development. He is a child of God, complete—a member of the household of God, joined unto the new race of which Jesus Christ is the head. He is to grow into the likeness of his Redeemer (II Peter 5 : 18), he is to bring forth fruits unto holiness (Rom. 6 : 22). The words of Paul to the Ephesians (4 : 17-24), are of vital interest and profit to all of God's children.

REDEMPTION IN ITS OUTWORKING.

7. The coming of Jesus was a sign that the Kingdom of heaven was at hand. This was the burden of John the Baptist's preaching. In a very real sense Jesus came to establish that Kingdom. It was a Kingdom of joy and peace in the Holy Spirit. It was an inward spiritual condition, rather than an outward physical manifestation. The sacrificial death of Jesus was the opening door to the Kingdom of God.

8. Jesus became the head of a new race. As in Adam all died, so in Christ should all be made alive (I Cor. 15 : 22). So the work of redemption had a large outlook. It wasn't enough to save man from sin. Having died to sin he became alive unto God and entered a new humanity, with Jesus as its head. Redeemed souls, were regarded as peculiar: "Jesus Christ who gave himself for us, that he might redeem

us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a [peculiar] people for his own possession, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). "But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession" (I Peter 2:9).

9. Looking back upon his old life the believer was to consider himself dead: "Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6:11); and his citizenship was to be in the new kingdom, "For our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20).

THE FINAL WORK OF REDEMPTION.

10. Saved from sin, unto the power of life eternal, what is the ultimate glory of redemption? We are to be like Him (I John 3:2). To this the believer is foreordained—"to be conformed to the image of His Son" (Rom. 8:29). Justified by the redemption wrought by Christ, he will also be glorified, and ultimately presented faultless, before the presence of God's glory. (See Rom. 8:30 and Jude 21.)

11. Redemption does not save man from temptation, it saves him in temptation (I Cor. 10:13). It does not save him from chastening—it saves him in chastening (Heb. 12:11). It does not save him from bodily ills, or final bodily death—it saves him in these afflictions and assures him of final victory.

12. Thus redemption through Jesus Christ is complete, final, eternal. And nothing can nullify it. Paul's triumphant cry may be ours:

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8 : 38, 39).

JUDGMENT IN REDEMPTION.

13. A reflection upon all that has gone before in these chapters on redemption, naturally leads us to a consideration of the significance and the consequences of the refusal of salvation thus provided. Let us think of the incentives held out to man. God's love is shown in Jesus Christ. Man by his own transgression fell. God in tenderest love seeks his restoration. The sorrows of the Christ, in his suffering, the burden of man's sin—call to man to love him in return. The gracious invitation which throbs all through the Bible, from the cry in the garden, "Where art thou?" to the sweet invitation to that other garden of the Lord, "And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come,"—from the beginning till now, early and late, God's voice is ever calling. Those who refuse to hear his voice, reject his invitation, refuse Christ, put his atoning work under their feet, who say, "We will not have this Man rule over us," theirs is not a condemnation of the Father so much as it is a self-condemnation. The sum of redemption is Jesus Christ. He stands before us as our Substitute, our Sin-Bearer, our Redeemer.

What think ye of Christ?

SUMMARY.

There is a universal sense of sin. Man feels that pardon is not enough—he needs moral power. Redemption furnishes new life. Redemption is unlimited in its application, though many do not accept it. Redemption is made available through submission to God, repentance from sin and faith in Christ. The results are peace, restoration, life. Redemption is the doorway to the new race, creating citizenship in the Kingdom of God. Redemption assures final victory. We shall be "forever with the Lord."

QUIZ.

Memorize the Summary. How does human history attest the need of redemption? Why is pardon insufficient? In what way does the redemption of Christ assure moral cleansing? If redemption is unlimited, why is it not universally accepted? How are men saved? Define the immediate results of redemption. What is the great hope in redemption? What is its final work?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The value of the Bible in giving a clear idea of redemption.

The love of God in the great invitations of the Bible. Hunt up some of them.

Our personal relationship to redemption.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Memorize the main scriptures in this chapter.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BIBLE AND CHRISTIANITY.

It has been an interesting and thrilling story. What a Book! As we look at it, complete, with a unity that is apparent and irresistible, it seems to claim a single Author, as though designed by One Mind, inspired by One Spirit, written by One Hand! With the diamond-like many-sidedness of an infinite versatility, it gleams with a manifold radiance unseen in other books, and it is as forceful as it is fair. It is in harmony with the universe and breathes an eternal, hopeful spirit.

THE FRUIT OF THE BIBLE.

1. Christianity is the fruit of the Bible. It is that, or it is nothing. It is not merely a system of morals, built upon the ethical deductions of philosophers or sages. It is not a system of mystical thinking based upon the vagaries of oriental cults. There is no relation between Christianity and Buddhism. There can be no alliance between them. Christianity rises above all religions, inherently possesses what is good in all, and has the errors of none. Teachers of Christianity have sometimes failed in its presentation; but that has been the result of human weakness, and not the weakness of Christianity.

2. Christianity, then, is the product of the

Bible; its roots are there; thence its branches spread; there its fruit is tested. With the Bible before us, with the truths of the preceding chapters in mind, what can we say of Christianity?

CHRISTIANITY A SUPERNATURAL RELIGION.

3. The Christian religion is essentially supernatural. It is spiritual, in that it deals with man in his spiritual life; it is supernatural in that it has to do with the Being above him—God. Natural religion makes men orphans. If there is no Divine Spirit, no address of God to the human heart, man is the loneliest creature in the universe. Doubly sad and tragic would his condition be, because he would consciously lack the life-sustaining atmosphere mentioned in Acts 17 : 28. Revealed religion, the religion of the supernatural, wherein that supernatural expresses love, is the saving blessing of humanity. Where supernaturalism is not superstition it becomes the soul-anchor of man, the saving strength of the world.

4. If we accept the religion of the Bible, its supernatural relationships, the divine life working in man, and among men, we shall have no difficulty with the miraculous elements in the Bible. Rather should we be surprised if the miracles were not there. The Bible, as the inspired word of God, the revelation of Jesus Christ, the religion of the spirit through the Spirit,—and Christianity in its spirit and ideals, are one and inseparable.

THE BIBLE FINDS EXPRESSION IN CHRISTIANITY.

5. It is in the Bible that Christianity finds its direction, its inspiration, its authority. It is in Christianity that the Bible finds its final expression. "By their fruits ye shall know them." The "sense" of the world accepts this conclusion. We may speak of comparative religions, we may discuss the universal elements of truth in all of them. We have seen how natural such conclusions are. But when we come to the Bible on the one hand, and Christianity in its spirit and ideals on the other, comparison ceases, save as it throws into superb relief the one Revelation of God—the Book; the one expression of the Bible's spirit and teaching—Christianity! "This is a faithful saying and worthy of *all acceptance*." No other "ism" or "faith" or "religion" is worthy of universal acceptance. In the presence of the Revelation of God in the Book, in Christ, the Orient calls to the Occident, and the Occident echoes back to the Orient, "Unto him who loved us, and gave himself for us, unto him be glory forever." This is the truth of God; this is the word of life!

NOT THE RELIGION OF A BOOK.

6. Christianity is said to be the religion of a book. That is but a half truth. Christianity is the religion of a Person. The Book gives the historical revelation; it is the window through which we see him; it is the doorway through which we pass to him; it is the light by which we

are directed to him. The Bible is not Christianity, Christ is Christianity, and "Christianity is Christ." The test of Christianity is obedience to Christ—but how can we be obedient unless we know his will? His will is in the Bible. Christianity is spiritual, supernatural—but how can we know the Voice unless we are taught. The language of the Spirit of God is the word of God—the Bible.

THE EVIDENCE OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

7. Christian experience, Christian consciousness is evidence incontrovertible. It is the movement of the Spirit, making the Christ real to us. Yet Christian consciousness rests itself in the Bible, feeds upon it; is directed, controlled, and intensified by it. The Bible-taught Christian is the Spirit-led Christian. Christ is greater than the Bible—certainly, but we should understand what is meant by it. Christ is greater than the Bible in the way that the *One* revealed is greater than the thing which reveals him. The landscape is greater than the window, but we cannot see the landscape without the window.

Is Christ, then, limited to the Bible in the revelation of himself to a human soul? No. He speaks by his Spirit to the human consciousness. But the written word is the touchstone. "Your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2:17) under the influence of the Holy Spirit, but those visions and dreams will accord with the Scrip-

ture, for the Spirit of Truth cannot contradict himself.

THE FOUNDATION STONES.

8. What are the foundation stones of Christianity?

(a) Christianity accepts *the Bible as the inspired Word of God*. It looks for no other revelation; but it expects that fuller light will yet stream from that word as those who believe in it enlarge their knowledge of it and become sharpened in spiritual discernment. Christianity does **not** change, but men's knowledge of it changes. Its foundations are no broader and deeper than at first, its walls no more extensive and all-embracing, its spires reach no higher into the heavens; but men are becoming more familiar with its greatness, and sometimes proclaim their discoveries as new truths, whereas they are but newly seen, and are in fact as old as the ages.

(b) Christianity believes in *the deity of Christ*—that God was manifested in the flesh. It believes that Jesus established his claims to oneness with God by the powers we naturally attribute to God: Power over matter, over spirit, over the issue—death. Power over matter, the elements—Matt. 8:26; Luke 8:24. Power over spirits—Matt. 17:18; Mark 1:25; Matt. 8:30-32. Power over the issue, death—Jairus' daughter, Mark 5:41; the widow's son, Luke 7:14; Lazarus, John 11:43. Power over death when it laid upon him—John 10:17, 18:

Matt. 28 : 6, 7. Jesus revealed these "powers," leaving nothing to be desired in the accounts. They possess dignity, sanity, benevolence, and symbolic force. They are altogether worthy of God, and are heaven's own certificates of Jesus' truthfulness when he uttered such words as, "I and my Father are one." "Before Abraham was I AM." He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

(c) Christianity rests upon *the atoning work of Christ*. He died for men. Expressed in many ways, the truth is clearly stated: Jesus Christ died for men, taking sin's penalty upon himself, becoming sin for man. He is our Substitute. Gal. 1 : 4; 2 : 20. "Paul knew by experience and by revelation—he knew by every way in which knowledge can find, and win, and hold the mind—that Christ did not die for nothing, nor for something—merely, but for everything" (Denney). The glory of Christianity is in the cross—Gal. 6 : 14; 2 Cor. 5 : 20.

(d) Christianity centers all its faith upon the *resurrection of Jesus from the dead*. The life of Jesus becomes the inspiration of our life; but the death and resurrection of Jesus is the foundation of all our hopes; the resurrection of Jesus is the central stone of the Christian's building. See Paul's conclusion: "The vanity of preaching: 'If Christ be not risen our preaching is in vain;' the emptiness of belief: 'If Christ be not risen your faith is also vain;' the falsehood of testimony: 'If Christ be not risen, we are found false witnesses of God;' the failure of

redemption: 'If Christ be not risen ye are yet in your sins; the collapse of hope: 'If Christ be not risen, then also they that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished'" (See I Cor. 15:14-20) —Hall, page 171.

(e) Christianity rests upon the *necessity of a new spiritual birth*—John 3:3; 2 Cor. 5:17. The evidences are discovered in the fruits of the Spirit—Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:22, 23.

(f) Christianity is *essentially humanitarian*. It is not an other-world religion. It seeks for the Kingdom of God among men. The proof of its Biblical character is in its ministry. It is the inspiration of all human service, even where it is denied. Humanity, brotherhood, are words synonymous with Christianity. Consider Matt. 11:5; Acts 2:44-47; James 1:27; and many other scriptures. A truly spiritual Christianity is the greatest social force in the world; the greatest Christian is he who most serves.

(g) *Christianity must cover the world*. It cannot abide alone in one section, or for one people. It must keep going in order to keep growing. The whole world is included in its purposes, its sympathies, its efforts. "Go preach," is its watchword. It is not a question of expediency but of "obedience." The King's orders admit of nothing else.

THE DEMANDS OF CHRISTIANITY.

9. The gospel is free—but its demands are costly. It demands the surrender of life, of tal-

ents, of service, of money—to God. A man becomes a Christian by the giving of himself and all he has into the hands of Christ. To withhold from him what he claims in any particular is so far to revoke the gift and cloud his confession. To be anti-missionary is to be un-Christlike, and to be un-Christlike is to be unchristian. A man who gets through the world cheaply, is likely to discover that he has deceived himself—he is no Christian at all.

10. Thus the Bible is related to Christianity, and Christianity is related to the Bible. There have been perversions, false ideals, over-zealous disciples who have magnified the letter and forgotten the spirit—but they have not affected Christianity, any more than a counterfeit effects the value of gold.

SUMMARY.

Christianity is the fruit of the Bible. Christianity is essentially supernatural—a spiritual religion. Christianity is the religion of a Person—but the book reveals the Person. Christianity rests upon the Bible as the word of God; the deity of Christ; the atoning work of Christ; the resurrection of Christ; the necessity of a new birth; it is essentially humanitarian; it is missionary in spirit and service. It calls for the surrender of the whole man to God.

QUIZ.

Define Christianity and the Bible in your own words. Why is the Bible necessary in a spiritual religion? What is the test of Chris-

tianity? Give the foundation stones of Christianity—defining each.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

Christianity without a Bible.

How the Book and life should be kept together.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Drill on the “foundation stones” in this chapter.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHAT EVERY CHRISTIAN OUGHT TO KNOW.

1. Every Christian ought to be much more than merely a saved person. Not a few have a *hope* they are saved, yet it is a hope that sometimes shines but dimly. There are some Christians who have no other hope than simply "to go to heaven when they die." They are members of churches, have submitted to the outer demands of Christ; they are but "nominal" Christians. Such lives are useless, so far as they religiously affect the world, and certainly yield little comfort to the persons themselves. There are some things every Christian ought to know concerning himself and the expectation of God, in the new life he has entered. Let us begin at the very beginning.

SURE OF HIS OWN SALVATION.

2. A Christian ought to be sure of his own salvation. When his experience goes no farther than the unhappy song—

“ ‘Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causeth anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no,
Am I his or am I not?”

—when his experience tarries in that fog of doubt, it goes without saying that he is, or

ought to be, decidedly unhappy, and of course he is useless. The first thing, then, is to settle one's own relationship to God. Am I saved?

3. It is not presumption to say that one is saved—absolutely. Paul's assurance, "I know in whom I have believed," is and ought to be the joyous assurance of every child of God. This assurance is an inner possession, firmly established in one's own consciousness. "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:16). This witness is clear and unmistakable to those who have ears to hear its testimony.

4. We ought to be very careful here lest we confound emotions with experiences, and confuse our *standing* in Christ with our *feeling* in Christ. In nothing does a Christian need a firmer grasp upon the Bible than in this matter of personal religious life. To be uncertain here is to be uncertain everywhere. So in this matter of the witness of the Spirit, let us learn the method of the Spirit. He speaks directly to the human heart, but the language of the Spirit is the word of God. He guides us into all truth (John 16:13); he takes of the things of Christ and declares them unto us (John 16:14). The entrance of God's word gives light. Let us settle it as a definite article of our faith, that the Spirit never speaks contrary to the word of God; that any "revelation" which is inconsistent with the written word is not of God. What does God's word say in this matter of salvation? We are born

again by the word of God (I Peter 1:23);—and that "word" is the written word of God. What message has it for a believer?

5. He is saved by trusting in Jesus Christ. He has realized his sinfulness, felt his own helplessness, and now confidently yields himself to God. According to the word of God he is saved, has everlasting life, will not come into judgment for his sin, and has passed from death unto life (see John 5:24). Every Christian ought to be settled on this wonderful truth. He may not understand the process, but he ought to enjoy the fact—and rest there. In the measure that he rests in the truths of God, in that measure will the Spirit's witness be real and abiding. He should have a large acquaintance with the truth that bears directly upon his own relationship to God.

6. He has been redeemed—Gal. 3:3; I Pet. 1:18; Rev. 5:9.

He is born again—I John 5:1.

He is a child of God—John 1:12.

He belongs to the elect race of the Kingdom—Phil. 3:20.

His body is a temple of God—I Cor. 3:16.

He is joined unto Christ—in his life, by faith in him, Gal. 2:20; in his death, as signified by his baptism, Rom. 6:4-6. He is henceforth to walk in newness of life.

OBEDIENCE THE PATHWAY TO PEACE.

7. Too often the Christian walks in darkness, the word of God is obscured, and the

inner witness is faint, for no other reason than that he is not obedient in his life. This disobedience manifests itself in ways other than in sinful acts. Every Christian ought to know that a silent, hidden, Christian life, is incompatible with the genius of the gospel. It is not only incompatible, it is also unjust to our Lord. The method of salvation is unfolded in Romans 10:9, 10: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." There have been some beautiful things written about people who were not known to confess Jesus here, becoming rare favorites in the heart of Christ hereafter; but the Bible has little sympathy with secret discipleship. It is the judgment of the writer that lack of witnessing is the cause of much unhappiness in the Christian life.

8. Not only is obedience in testimony the pathway to peace, but obedience in life as well. It will not do to say, "Lord, Lord," in verbal testimony, and then deny him in everyday living. It goes without saying that the Kingdom of God suffers more from inconsistent disciples than from outspoken unbelievers or infidels. The Christian is expected to stay in the world—but he is to keep himself from it. He is to live a separated life, in conduct and speech, though he is to remain in touch

with the world in order to help save it (see II Cor. 6:17, 18).

9. There is no ascetic or monkish life here suggested to the Christian. He lives in the world, he makes his "living" in the world. It is his Father's world, and so belongs to him in peculiar right, and he is entitled to a fair share of the world's product. Any suggestion that the world belongs to Satan, that the Christian shall gather his garments about him, and rush through it as fast as he can, is contrary to the whole teaching of the Bible, both in precept and example. "The earth is Jehovah's and the fulness thereof" (Psalm 24:1), and the Christian may enjoy it to the full. "Godliness . . . having promise of the life which now is" (II Tim. 4:8); "All are yours" (I Cor. 3:21). The "world" which Jesus condemned was the world of sinners, and not the world of nature. So the Christian shall keep himself "unspotted" from the world of evil. The necessity for this suggestion here must be apparent to every reader. As Ephraim of old "mixed himself with the people" and thus brought ruin, so the children of God have often brought reproach upon the kingdom by similar mixing. Every Christian ought to know this.

HIS RELATIONSHIP TO THE WORLD.

10. Every Christian ought to know what God expects of him in his relations to the world.

He is not saved, for himself alone, nor merely for the glory of God.

11. He is light to the world and salt to the earth—see Matthew 5:13-16; Phil. 2:15.

12. He is the only Bible the world will read—II Cor. 3:2, 3. We know how faithfully this “bible” is read by the world.

13. God has no voice with which to carry the message of salvation only as he speaks through the voice of his children. He has no feet to carry the messages of good to the far away souls of earth, only as he uses the Christian’s feet. This is a solemn truth, but a thrillingly joyous truth as well. God, closed up to the human instrument for the carrying out of his purposes to the world, is one of the most searching truths indicated by his word, and one of the most suggestive thoughts ever sent through the heart of his people. Every Christian ought to know it, and realize it. (See Rom. 10:14, 15.)

THE GIFTS OF A CHRISTIAN.

14. Every Christian ought to know something of what are called the “gifts” which are imparted to God’s children. We ought to remember that gifts vary, but that all have gifts—which means simply that all have some ability to serve. We become “gifted” through service. Timothy received solemn charge concerning gifts. Paul told him to stir up the gift that was in him (II Tim. 1:6). The implication is natural—that if Timothy failed

to stir up the gift that was in him, it would be taken from him. This is the principle clearly taught in the parable of the talents (Matt. 25 : 15-30). Yet we should remember that there are some special gifts given to men. They vary according to the will of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12). To intimate that all Christians can have these gifts, is to lay a burden upon some they are not called upon to bear.

15. The chief "gift" in the Christian life is "character." In discussing the subject with the Corinthians, Paul enumerated some of the "gifts" that some people possessed, and then pointed to the chief gift—that of love. Study I Cor. 12 and 13. Every Christian ought to know the possibilities of a life of love.

POWER.

16. Much is said about spiritual power. The impression often given is that spiritual power is given to believers in order that they may have great and joyous experiences. These gifts of power are called special blessings. Every Christian ought to know the law of spiritual power. "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). This great promise contains a living principle—power is given for service. The power of the Holy Spirit is not given for felicity but for facility; it is given, not for a holy experience but for

a holy expedition. We would save ourselves much confusion, if we accepted this law of spiritual power. God's power comes—at the touch of one's hand, as he puts it to the plough of holy service. There is only one legitimate enjoyment in the normal Christian life—the joy that comes through service for the Master.

HIS WIDER RELATIONSHIP.

17. Every Christian ought to know that he is related to the world, in obligation to help save the world. He is to go into all the world—in spirit or in person, in help or in life—and tell the good tidings of redemption through Jesus Christ. To lack what we call the missionary spirit is to lack the vital life of the Christ, who gave himself not for us alone, but for the whole world.

These are some fundamental things which every Christian ought to take earnestly to heart, and ponder them until they become part of his life. It is much to learn, but we have a blessed Teacher (Matt. 11 : 28-30).

SUMMARY.

Every Christian ought to know the ground of his hope. He ought to have the witness of the Spirit—who uses the word of God to impart the blessed knowledge. He is saved through faith in Christ. Obedience is the pathway to peace; one should obey in witnessing and life. He is to keep himself from sin, yet remain in the world. He is the messenger of God to the world. Gifts

grow by using, and all have the gift of service. Spiritual power is for service only. Every true Christian is a missionary—in life and service.

QUIZ.

What is the first thing a Christian ought to know? How can one be sure of his salvation? Why is it necessary to know? Give the "facts" in paragraph 6. Why is obedience the pathway to peace? Define some phases of disobedience. What is the Christian's relationship to the world? What about gifts—what are they for? How can we possess power? Define the Christian's world—relationship.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The difference between our "standing" in Christ and our experiences of religion.

The obligation upon us for truth clearly understood.

Hindrances to soul-growth.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Memorize the main scriptures indicated in this chapter.

CHAPTER XX.

THE BIBLE AND ITS PROMISES.

Part I.

1. The Bible is peculiarly a book of promises. In view of human sin and degradation, in which all nature shared (Rom. 8 : 20-22), it has taken to its heart the hard problems of man and the world, and has sent through them all many mighty promises of help, of redemption, of final restoration and glory. There is only one thing that stands in the way of the fulfilment of the promises of the Bible—the persistent opposing will of man. The machinery of the universe is adjusted to his well-being; the great purposes of God are all directed to his happiness, and the ultimate “gathering up” into eternal fellowship with God, the Father, of all who will be obedient to him.

From Genesis, with its stately beginnings, in nature and in man, to Revelation, with its startling imagery, its final battles between good and evil, the ultimate triumph of right, the vision of perpetual peace—the Bible is full of gracious promises of good to man. How shall we realize them?

THE MISTAKEN METHOD.

2. We are all acquainted with a common

method of "proving the promises." There are not a few who decide what they want, and then go to the Bible, find a promise, and begin to pray, hoping that the promise of the book may be answered; which answer is the request of their petition, whatever it may be. In this way many Christians have been disappointed. The truth must be admitted that these promises are not often realized in the way people generally read them.

3. The strangest methods are sometimes adopted to "prove the promises." Men have resorted to extreme measures to prove that God has verified promises to them. Sometimes there is truth in what they say; oftener they are sadly misguided. We should bear in mind that the Bible is not a check-book, nor is it a slot-machine. Nor is it a *text*-book, as we commonly understand it. We are not to go to the Bible, draw a promise, endorse it with our faith, and pass it over the counter for payment. That assumes too much for the wisdom of man, and takes from God the freedom of judgment, and the operation of love—both of which might prompt God to reply: It is unwise to grant the request.

SOME CONSIDERATIONS.

In the presence of much dissatisfaction over this subject of prayer and its answer (for that is really what our subject implies) there are several considerations that should be made.

4. *A Christian has not changed his human*

nature or human experience by reason of his faith in God. Faith is not an exemption clause in the agreement which God makes with man. This would make Christianity simply a commercial transaction in which so much faith would buy so much good, both in positive gain and exemption from harm. A great battle over the Bible has waged strongly at this point. The atonement has been extended to cover the bodily ills of man—and the story of “healing,” in its few successes and many sad failures, is one of the unhappy phases of Christian history.

5. We have freely discussed the great work of Redemption (Chapters XVI and XVII). In this connection it will be wise to again call attention to the self-evident truth that the atonement *did not include man's exemption from physical trial and suffering.* It is true that righteous living, a fuller obedience to God's laws, ought to, and usually will, produce a better physical life, as it does a better spiritual, social, and national life. But the gospel is no germicide. The Christian is subject to bodily ills, and nothing can keep him from the grave at the last. When it is said that “He bore our sicknesses,” a saying often quoted in this connection, we may also be reminded of that other statement, “He tasted death for every man.” Yet men do get sick, and they will die. We should not interpret the former as physical and the latter as spiritual.

6. This is not saying that God does not intervene again and again and impart healing in

answer to prayer; the devout physician always depends upon the Great Physician. But our purpose is to make plain the truth (as we see it) that the promises of the Bible are to be taken in their relation to life and not to specific actions in the individual.

Two PHASES CONSIDERED.

7. There are two phases of this matter that may be considered. We should regard the many promises in the Bible in the light of their own immediate meaning, and in view of the possible will of God's gracious purposes. This at once leads us to a simple interpretation of faith, as related to the promises. *Prayer makes its request with a faith that surrenders entirely to the will of God; presumption demands and assumes the will of God.* We cannot be sure of the will of God in every given experience, nor is the Bible intended to assure the will of God in every instance of life. The unmistakable teaching is that the just shall live by faith—and *faith is not sight!*

8. In the main we are to remember that *man is to be guided through his faculties*, and not by visions or dreams, or startling spiritual manifestations. There have been such leadings, clearly from God, but they are not the normal experiences. "If any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not" (James 1: 5). James adds, "but let him ask in faith, nothing doubting," which surely means the surrendered will to the

influences of the Spirit. So will he be guided in judgment.

SOME PROMISES INDICATING GOD'S WILL.

9. Let us consider some of the promises in the light of these general principles. We need not consider the promises concerning salvation, they are so simple that we cannot mistake them; they are the promise of God to every soul, "he that believeth." It is the acceptance of faith—not the pleading of faith, that brings us into the family of God (John 1 : 12).

10. Here are some leading promises of the Bible: "For Jehovah is a sun and a shield; Jehovah will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly (Psalm 84 : 11). "For the eyes of Jehovah run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him" (2 Chron. 16 : 9). These promises are quoted because they lie at the very foundation of the teaching in this chapter. They declare God's purposes for his children regardless of specific petition, which is a fundamental consideration. In connection with them, let us read Paul's statement: "For we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered; and he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8 : 26, 27). Here is also clearly indi-

cated God's purposes for his children, above and beyond their petitions, seeing that human judgment is often weak, and likely to ask for what one should not have. To be sure of these promises is to greatly simplify the life of faith. God knows, God is anxious to serve; he straightens out the unwise prayer. Only space—and the limitations of this book—keeps us from elaborating this great and gracious truth.

PROMISES IMPLYING A LIFE IN CHRIST.

11. Let us consider promises of another character: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15 : 7). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do because I go unto the Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name that will I do" (John 14 : 12-14). "And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he heareth us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him" (I John 5 : 14, 15).

These promises so often quoted, and so often pleaded in utter misapprehension of their significance, are vital in their spiritual suggestiveness. They imply a oneness with Christ, a union so close that one can pray in his name, or

in his spirit, in which human desires are swallowed up in the desire to do the will of God—and in that spiritual atmosphere the Christian's prayer becomes the will of God. The whole intent of these promises is toward the establishing of the Kingdom of God among men, and not for the mere gratification of a—doubtless unconscious—selfish life. If we keep in mind the difference noted above—faith surrenders, presumption demands—we shall understand the distinctions here made.

FAITH—AND THE PROMISES.

12. The matter of faith in connection with the promises of the Bible must also receive attention. Here is a striking passage: "And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye would say unto this sycamine tree, be thou rooted up, and be thou planted in the sea; and it would obey you" (Luke 17: 5, 6). This scripture is so illustrative of a great number of others, that it is taken by itself and considered as representative of all.

FAITH NOT IDLE.

13. The writer makes bold to differ from the commonly accepted interpretation of this passage. It is the verse over which many have shipwrecked their faith. Christian faith is not a matter of quantity, but of quality. The quality here suggested is not a supine or lazy faith. It does not mean a small thing, a simple

act of one's heart, with a dependence upon God to do the thing asked for, or commanded. It isn't a faith that is inactive—a do-nothing faith. It does not imply that the use of means in any service reveals a lack of faith. That method of reasoning is degrading to the dignity of man, and considers him a child in the kindergarten, and not a man with faculties of mental and physical power.

14. Mustard-seed is not lifeless. It has expanding, enlarging, "gripping" power. It reaches down with its roots and reaches upward with its branches. It does not lie still in the garner. Faith, of the mustard-seed, tree-uprooting character, is an active principle, it urges to the mightiest effort; it calls for faith at the point of the hand-clasp; it prays, it works, it *lifts*, and the tree is uprooted. For a mustard-seed faith impels to the strongest effort of the will and the hand.

PROMISES AND LIFE.

15. The promises, then, are so closely allied to the development of life, the spread of the kingdom among men, that we belittle them when we relate them to the petty things of life, using them as one would drop a nickle into a slot-machine, expecting an answer to come out at the other end.

16. Yet we may miss the inner sweetness and power of our theme, and thus lose its spiritual helpfulness, if we leave the subject here. Let us keep in mind the purpose of God as unfolded

in the Scriptures: to bring us all into full fellowship with God, to make of us full-grown men and women in Christ Jesus, and not little children. "I have called you friends," said Jesus, in enlarging upon the great fellowship; "for all things that I have heard from my Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:15). There is a plea for spiritual unity in John 17 which is unmistakable in its significance. It is far removed from the "prayer-and-answer" ideas so common among us. Let us rise into this larger life. What is it? We must continue the subject into the next chapter. Let us gather together the things here discussed—in the Summary.

SUMMARY.

The Bible is a book of promises. God's promise of redemption and life is the message of the Bible. The Bible is not simply a check-book for capricious use—it is a book of life. A Christian has the common experiences of life, physically, but he has the added experience—a life in God. The promises are to be viewed in the light of immediate meaning and God's will for us. Faith surrenders, presumption demands. God promises to save us, help us, keep us—even though prayer may not always be intelligent. Faith is not an idle waiting on God but determined activity with God. We are to be men in faith and fellowship, and not children.

QUIZ.

Memorize the Summary. What are the pur-

poses of God in his dealings with men? Define some mistaken ways of using promises. How do such methods regard God? Describe the normal, physical life of a Christian. What is the difference between faith and presumption? How is man naturally guided? Repeat promises indicating God's will toward us. Repeat promises suggesting union with Christ. What is a mustard-seed faith? What is the calling of Christ in John 15:15?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

Illustrate submission and presumption.

Human activity in working with God's promises.

Fellowship with God in order to a knowledge of the will of God.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Bible drill on the books and divisions.

Memorize the promises contained in this chapter

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BIBLE AND ITS PROMISES.

Part II.

The preceding chapter closed with some important things unsaid. It is a large theme, and we cannot hope to do more than outline its main features, yet we ought to touch the subject sufficiently to give us a fairly comprehensive view of the vital matter. We have considered the teaching in its general application. We need to come yet closer to it. If we can strengthen young Christians, and guide them intelligently; if we can help disappointed and discouraged hearts, we ought to rejoice in the privilege.

PROMISES BEYOND PRAYERS.

1. God's promises of help reach beyond the prayers of his children. As before stated, we do not know what to pray for (Rom. 8:26, 27). God will not withhold any good thing simply because we do not ask properly. An "upright," "perfect" (which terms mean sincere, whole) life insures God's blessing. In that ideal time or condition pictured by Isaiah, the promise is: "And it shall come to pass that, before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear" (Isaiah 65:24).

The meaning of such promises is heart-stimulating. We can go on, loving and serving, knowing that our Father is watching over us, taking care of us, anticipating our needs, and preparing for their supply. "Jehovah will perfect that which concerneth me" (Psalm 138:8). "He chooseth our inheritance for us" (Psalm 47:4).

PRAYER—AND THE PROMISES.

2. This leads us to a consideration of the prayer-life as it is related to the promises. Do we simply take a promise and go to God, ask for what we want, and go away—with the request granted? *That* is not the common experience—though it is common to ask, and be disappointed! Let us draw some needed distinctions here.

THE KINDERGARTEN.

3. There is a kindergarten period in every life—the life of childhood. That is the period of petition. We are ever asking for things. But a wise mother is as good when she refuses as when she gives. There comes a time when we leave the kindergarten. As we grow away from it we *ask* less and less. Instead of clamoring for things, we learn the delightful art of communion, of fellowship; we *ask* less, and *tell* more! We must remember, however, that no good thing is withheld from childhood in the kindergarten, even though two-thirds of its petitions are refused.

IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

4. There is a kindergarten in the spiritual life. Prayer, in the kindergarten, is simply petition. It is ever asking for *things*. It takes a promise, like some of those quoted in the last chapter, and insists that God must answer on the basis of the promise quoted, when there may be no relation whatever between the thing asked for and the real meaning of the quoted promise. How many are thus disappointed! How great is the company in life's kindergarten; and many live and die there, perpetual children, who have never learned the delights of fellowship, the blessing in the privilege of talking over the troublesome questions, and leaving the matter with God!

THE LARGER WORLD.

5. There is a large world outside of the kindergarten. It is the purpose of the Bible to lead us out, as we hope to discover in the next chapter. What is the immediate meaning for us? The answer ought to open the door for many of us, leading out of the mechanical life, into the freedom of the spiritual life.

A MODEL PRAYER.

6. In the eleventh chapter of John, the tender story of Lazarus' death is told. The message which the sisters sent to Jesus is one of the most restful and suggestive messages in the Bible. There was a great burden on their hearts—Lazarus was sick—nigh to death.

Jesus, their dearest friend, could help him. Did they send a storming message to Christ, urging him to come at once, and heal him? No, Mary and Martha had come out of the kindergarten —*they knew Jesus!* “Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick.” That was enough. He would know what to do. Would he heal him? Perhaps. But *that* would better be left to Jesus. The great issue was in his hand. It might be even *discourteous* to suggest the thing to be done. For *he* would know.

GREAT REACH OF FAITH.

7. The message of Mary and Martha to Jesus, illustrates the greatest reach of faith possible to a believer; it is clearly one of the most beautiful expressions of faith in the Bible. A book of this character is not the place for the emergence of personal experience upon its pages. But the occasion will surely permit this: No greater spiritual event has occurred in the experience of the writer than the theme here suggested; and the restfulness of a prayer like unto the message of the sisters of Bethany to Jesus, is like the peace of a great river in its flow. It is not the kindergarten of clamor; it is the communion of friend with Friend. What a world of difference between the atmosphere of agonizing petition, and that of simply telling, talking it over, viewing it from every side, and on the strength of the promises that “no good thing will he withhold,” leave it there —with God! That is the sublimity of faith!

That is the restfulness of faith! That is living in the promises!

DO THE PROMISES MEAN ANYTHING?

8. A common question rises here which should be answered. Does not this view make many of the promises of no practical worth? What is the use of praying at all?

There is need for, and room for, a larger prayer-life, than ever before. And the promises shine with new significance. We are brought up into fellowship with God. We talk over the affairs of life, and of the kingdom in a new and more intelligent way. The activities of life take on new meaning. The mechanical, "statistical" service is gone. We are workers together with God, and are in the circle of his friends. The old cry of mere petition is growing less, and the longing for communion grows stronger. It is more than an act of fellowship, it is a life of fellowship; it is more than merely stated prayer, it is a "state of prayer." Instead of living in the outer court of requests we enter the inner circle of communion, among the friends of God.

THE DOOR TO THE PROMISES.

9. We thus approach the promises in a new way. What is God's will? We reach the promise in John 15:7 through the door of *abiding in him*, and not by way of "ask whatsoever ye will;" and it goes without saying that the difference is strikingly significant.

We ask what we will for the reason that our will becomes the will of our Lord!

Many promises are clearly conditioned. "Ask and ye shall receive" (John 16:24). Wisdom is promised to those who ask in *faith* nothing wavering (James 1:5, 6). "All things work together for good *to them that love God*" (Rom. 8:28). Exaltation is assured *to him that humbleth himself* (Luke 14:11). All the beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-9), and many other familiar passages are to the same effect. Many are disappointed because they fail to comply with the conditions.

THE PRAYER OF PETITION.

10. While special emphasis has been laid upon the *prayer-life*, we must not understand that petition in prayer has therefore been eliminated. Communion and fellowship give prayer a wider range, as has been suggested; yet petition has its legitimate place. But life in Christ, life-submission to Christ, will regulate and largely modify the element of petition. Life's pathway is uncertain, we cannot trace the way; there are special needs which press upon us. Long as life lasts do we need to ask for help, for specific "things." It is under such circumstances that man's extremity becomes God's gracious opportunity. He delights to answer prayer — the petition that grows out of communion and life's direst needs.

UNDERSTAND THE REFUSALS.

11. We also discover that in this newer

atmosphere we shall be able to understand the refusals of our Lord. He does not answer all our prayers. We pray for our sick—and they do not recover. We linger over the dying, and are led to cry out for rescue—but

"Death comes down with reckless footstep
To the hall and hut,"

and we walk over the silent pathway. There are mysteries many, chastenings severe. We suffer as He suffered. But we learn that He is—

"Good when He gives, supremely good,
Nor less when he denies,
E'en crosses [from his sovereign hand
Are blessings in disguise."

GOD LEADS IN HIS WAY.

12. We learn that the gracious promise "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go, I will counsel thee with mine eye upon thee" (Psalm 32:8), does not mean that we shall choose the path, but that he chooses it. We are willing to rest in the assurance that though we may not know how the road winds, we are sure of the outcome. We are not "begging the question," in this presentation; rather are we intelligently declaring it, that we may lay hold of the promises of God, knowing that not one of them shall fail. It would be disastrous to give into our hands the fulfilment of the promises of God, according to our interpretation of them. Rather will we surrender ourselves into the keeping of the God of promise who knows the beginning

and the end, who will ultimately bring us to see that every word of God is true, and that not a syllable has been broken.

SOME GREAT PROMISES.

13. Let us gather together a few promises of the Bible that are ours to claim and live by :

We are invited to come to God—Isa. 55 : 1, 3, 7.

We have the promise of everlasting life—John 5 : 24, and many others.

We have the promise of constant help—Phil. 4 : 19; Isa. 41 : 10; and many others.

We have the promise of the presence of Jesus—Matt. 28 : 20.

We shall be kept in peace—John 14 : 27; Isaiah 26 : 3.

All things shall work together for good—Rom. 8 : 28.

We shall abide with God forever—John 14 ; Rev. 21 and 22.

THEIR LARGER APPLICATION.

14. The promises of God have larger application than simply the supplying of our personal needs. Here, too, we have minimized the Bible. There are great promises that affect nations as well as individuals. There are world promises. We may call them prophecies, but they are the promises of God to a world of men indicating his purposes in redemption.

15. We are assured of the final triumph of righteousness. Jesus is not leading us on to

defeat. The Captain of our Salvation will ultimately triumph. There are those who take a dark view of things. They feel that evil is rampant, that "wrong is forever on the throne." It sometimes looks that way. But Jesus "must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (I Cor. 15 : 25). This great promise of God should greatly encourage those who are fighting the moral battles of the world. Sin is strong, but Christ is stronger. The last enemy to be destroyed is death, and the promise is that "the last enemy" *will* be destroyed (I Cor. 15 : 26).

SUMMARY.

God's promises reach beyond the prayers of his children. He does not wait until they pray aright in order to bless them. The kindergarten period of life is a period of asking; as we grow out of it we tell more and *ask* less. The message of the sisters of Lazarus is the sublimest reach of faith—we cannot go beyond it. In the atmosphere of communion prayer means more—it enters into the life of the Spirit. The doorway of approach to the promises is union with Christ. Faith implies restfulness, but it calls for intelligent activity. Petition has its place, and the promises become real, since we have learned to pray in the Spirit. The promises have world-application as well as individual meaning. Good will ultimately triumph according to the promises of God.

QUIZ.

State how God's promises reach beyond our

prayers. What is the kindergarten experience in childhood? Define its meaning in the Christian life. What is the difference between petition and communion? Tell the story of Lazarus. Why was the sisters' message an indication of faith? How does this view make a larger prayer-life possible? What is the open door to the promises? Why has petition a real place in prayer? What does the communion atmosphere assure us? What are the great promises? Define the larger application of the promises of God.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The possibility of a prayer-life.

Mistaken mechanical methods in proving the promises.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Memorize the main promises in this chapter.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE BIBLE AND ITS PRACTICAL AND SPIRITUAL SERVICE.

SPIRITUAL FOOD.

1. The Bible is to the spiritual life of man what food is to the physical life. The Bible develops Christian character as food develops the body. Prayer is the Christian's "vital breath;" but the Bible is his food. In the measure that one lives upon it, in that measure is he [strong]. The prayer-life that is not nourished by the word of God, directly or indirectly, is likely to be fanatical and of little moral benefit to the world. It is true, there have been occasionally ignorant Christians who have done good; but they did not pride themselves on their ignorance and they proved their devotion to the will of God by their manifest desire to know his word. Ignorance of the Bible is a most deplorable thing today; even among so-called cultured people. It is a source and sign of spiritual barrenness, an evidence of misapplied educational effort.

2. The Bible is full of spiritual teaching; it is at the same time the most practical and sensible book in the world. It touches every phase of human life. Since it is God's message to

man, there is nothing that concerns man which is not discussed in the Bible. To every stage of life from youth to age, in every relation of life, domestic, social, industrial, political, in regard to every high interest of life, intellectual, ethical, religious, it speaks with a tone of sympathy and authority. It guides man in his childhood, has a message for his manhood, gives him direction in his personal life and love, speaks to him concerning his business, directs him to God as his Saviour and Guide, opens the windows to the spiritual fields, and flings wide the gate to the land of peace, as he descends the hill in the evening of his life. It is his daily food, his refreshing drink, his equipment for the journey, the light to his path. He is never disappointed when he turns to it for help; it is the bread of his bread, the life of his life.

GOD'S OPINION OF IT.

3. We are taking a hurried glance over some of the things we have studied in this book. In Deuteronomy 6 : 6-9, the words of Moses indicate the divine estimate upon the law then given: "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes, and thou shalt write them upon the

door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates." This indicates the practical value of the law of God. It will be remembered that the ten commandments form part of this law. The commandments make the sheet-anchor of human liberty in all ages—to the end of time.

4. Joshua was also instructed concerning the practical service of the law of God. Moses was a law giver—a statesman; Joshua was a soldier. Yet both are directed to the law of God. "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate thereon day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Joshua 1 : 8). These are Jehovah's words to Joshua.

5. In considering the prosperous man, the ideal character, the writer of the first Psalm put it in this fashion: "His delight is in the law of Jehovah; and on his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also doth not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Psalm 1 : 2, 3).

6. Perhaps no language rises higher than the psalmist in Psalm 19 : 7-11, "The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of Jehovah is sure-making wise the simple. The precepts of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of Jehovah is pure enlightening the eyes. The fear of Jehovah is

clean, enduring forever: the ordinances of Jehovah are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the droppings of the honey-comb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward."

7. In indicating the cause of Jewish ignorance, Jesus plainly declared that it was owing to a neglect of the Scripture, or a misreading of it. "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures" (Matt. 22 : 29). The statement in the address of Paul at Antioch of Pisidia is strikingly forceful: "For they that dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him" (Acts 13 : 27).

8. When Paul bade farewell to the Ephesian elders he commended the word of God to them, in this striking language: "And now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified" (Acts 20 : 32).

9. Going back to an early day, Jeremiah speaks of the words of God in this enthusiastic way: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy words were unto me a joy and the rejoicing of my heart" (Jer. 15 : 16). Such are the voices of the Bible concerning its own practical and spiritual value.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

10. With this exalted presentation of the

theme, let us consider a few suggestions to guide in practical reading and living. We should read some portion of the Bible every day. This daily portion should be pursued with some idea of continuity. If the teachings of these chapters have been mastered the reader will have a comprehensive view of the Bible, with a fair grasp of its main teachings. He will become a skilled workman, with application and earnest daily effort. Looking upon the Bible as food he should have his daily portion. A few verses of scripture in the morning will make the day move on a plane higher than is possible otherwise. Take such daily portion. Live in the Psalm country for a month. Let its music sing itself into your heart, until the many expressions in the 119th Psalm will rise to your lips. You will be in a land of gladness and joy.

11. We should make more definite journeys in the Word, with spiritual ends in view. The life of Jesus must ever be the chief joy of the Christian; while the setting forth of the deep things of grace in the epistles is a spiritual spring that ever flows with life-giving power. It is not always easy to follow Paul; but no writer repays in such large returns as he, after one lingers over his utterances and looks to the Spirit for guidance into the truth.

12. There is a difference between devotional and technical reading. We too often study for others, and do not feed ourselves. We need to go to the book again and again for

no other purpose than to let its truth filter into our inner being, to feed the life of the whole man. Only in such way can we realize the deeply spiritual utterance: "Thy word have I laid up in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psalm 119 : 11).

SPECIAL METHODS.

13. It is scarcely within the purpose of this book to indicate special methods of reading —yet some general suggestions may be helpful and fitting. Our scheme of study has itself been a method by which the truth may be apprehended. Simple as we hope these chapters have been, some other practical intimations may be desired.

The book of Proverbs will ever be the best book of morals in the world. It is a neglected book. Among children its value has been marked for good. The deeply spiritual value of the Psalms has just been mentioned; the spiritual uplift in Isaiah is like unto the richness of the gospels. There are charming idylls in the Bible. Some of the "stories" in Genesis rise to great heights, while Ruth has no rival anywhere. The problem of sin and suffering finds sympathetic setting in Job. The minor prophets are the messages of the reformers of the olden time. These references are not intended for comparison with other rich treasures of the Bible, but only for emphasis and special notation.

14. Perhaps another simple intimation as

to the practical and spiritual use of the Bible may be given. Seek to know the teachings of the Bible concerning some great themes of life. What has the Bible to say about peace, joy, believing, hope, love, patience, heaven, etc.? There is literally no end to the possibilities in this direction.

THE BIBLE MEMORIZED.

15. The Bible should have large place in the spiritual life. As indicated, it is the soul's food. But one is ever at a disadvantage if he has not a fund of scripture in his heart. "By heart" is one of the best phrases ever coined. The value of memorized scripture cannot be over-estimated. It speaks to the troubled heart when the printed page is not at hand; it is a light within when the outer light fails, and one sits in the shadows. It rises to the lips in fitting message when one bends over the sick; it sheds a bright light into the valley of the shadow.

Such memorizing of Scripture is easier than it first appears. It is amazing how keen the memory becomes when seeking to learn spiritual truths. We are guided into the truth by the Spirit of Truth. A verse a day, or a verse a week will soon create a blessed spiritual store.

DIFFICULTIES.

16. There are difficulties in the Bible; but they need not disturb the spiritual life. Difficult questions of historical statements, dates,

and authorship, have their place in the class-room; they need not be permitted to enter the devotional life.

IN PUBLIC ASSEMBLY.

17. The Bible should have greater prominence in our church meetings. We should use it in testimony; in direct quotation. It has great power when aptly quoted. We should know the Book as a book, its titles, its divisions, the burden of its messages. We should hear the music of the gospel, letting it sing its way into our hearts and lives. A Bible reading people will make a soul-winning people.

18. We are living in an age of departures from "the faith"—yet all the vagrants claim the Bible as their guide. When the Christian churches return to the Bible, and preach it and live it with an old time zeal, we shall witness greater triumphs for the Kingdom of God than we have ever known.

SUMMARY.

The Bible is spiritual food. It is also the most practical book in the world. It touches every phase of life. God's estimate of "the word" is shown in the injunctions given to Moses, and Joshua. The psalmists sing its praises, and Paul commends it for soul-growth. The Bible should be read daily, with some regard for its continuity. It has many messages for every need, and never fails in the spiritual life.

QUIZ.

How is the Christian to regard the Bible? Give the gist of the quotations in paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9. Give some of the practical suggestions. What special methods are indicated? What attitude should we assume toward difficulties?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

Our own methods of devotional use of the Bible.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Memorize the Scripture quoted in this chapter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE BIBLE AND SOUL-WINNING.

Part I.

1. No greater theme could claim our attention. The main purpose of this book is not mere accumulation of knowledge, intellectual, or even spiritual, enjoyment. We have more serious business in hand. We are to become wise workmen, fitted for the largest possible service, of greatest use to men, and of the highest honor to God. Soul-winning, soul-saving, soul-upbuilding,—this is the profound subject that now claims our thought and study. May we be guided by Him who died to win man to himself.

The question of mechanics—methods—is least important, so we consider that phase last. More vital matters should have first attention. It is one thing to be moved by passing enthusiasm, and the quotation of a few trite texts; it is another thing to be moved by the great principles of the gospel, to get into the movement of world-winning, as it is disclosed in the Bible.

LOSING IN ORDER TO FINDING.

2. Let us place before us the fundamental principle of the ideal life as laid down by Jesus

Christ: "For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it" (Mark 8:35). This saying of Jesus goes deeper than we commonly suppose. It does not mean a martyr's death as a testimony to the Christ. Its reach is far beyond that: it means a surrender of life to the life of another—to his saving. It is the call to every soul to the work of soul-winning.

THE BIBLE A WORLD-BOOK.

3. This principle is the Bible principle. The Bible is a world-book. It has no message for one man or people that is not sent to every man, and to all people. This is deeply imbedded in the very life-ideal, from the beginning of the Bible. Professor Drummond coined a phrase concerning man in his development which expresses man at his best. "The struggle for Life," said he, ". . . . in lower nature, obeying the law of self-preservation, devotes its energies to feed itself." That is the sum of selfishness. A new era dawns for man when he loses himself in the "Struggle for the Life of Others." It was not good for man to be alone—not only for natural reasons, but also for spiritual reasons. He would never know the power of sympathy and love. He would never know the life that is possible, as one enters into the great love-struggle, the "Struggle for the Life of Others."

“MISSIONARY” AND “EVANGELISTIC”
SYNONYMOUS.

4. As we look at this principle, so briefly intimated, we see that the words “missionary” and “evangelistic” should be synonymous in the Christian’s vocabulary. There is only one geography to be considered in Christian service —the map drawn in John 3:16.

ELECTION—FOR SERVICE.

5. The Bible, then, is God’s message to the world. Its finds its truest application as it is carried to the ends of the earth. World-salvation is the dominant thought of the Book. There is the gradual unfolding of God’s plan in Abraham. All the world shall be blessed in him. At no place in the history is this purpose obscured or lost to sight. Wherever the “plan” or leading of God seems to narrow itself to one man or people, it is not for the sake of favoritism but election to service.

6. God’s love for the Jewish people was never intended to exclude others from his gracious purposes; on the contrary, it was to reach all others more effectively. He has the salvation of the whole world ever in his view. This election to service is the striking method of God in dealing with individuals as well as nations. We may lay it down as fundamental, that God’s election of men and nations is never for their enjoyment, but for their largest service. *No-blesse oblige* is written over all the gifts of God.

7. The struggle for the life of others is the noblest struggle in the world. We find ourselves in the measure that we lose ourselves in and for the lives of others.

ISAIAH'S HOPE.

8. World-salvation is the burden of Isaiah's prophecy. It is not of a Jewish king he sings—but One who shall rule over the earth—a world won to himself: “Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end” (Isa. 9 : 7). There is coming a time when “the land that reacheth afar” shall be nigh, and the sick world shall be sick no more. Read Isaiah 33 : 17-24. The thirty-fifth of Isaiah is a vision of glory that shall not fade away, and the time when the deaf shall hear and blind eyes see is the far-seeing reality of the prophet who belongs to the world, and not to the Jewish nation.

9. So we grasp the meaning of God in the Old Testament for the winning of a world to him. One of the saddest cries in the Old Testament is the lament of the Psalmist: “Look on my right hand and see; for there is no man that knoweth me; refuge hath failed me; no man careth for my soul” (Psalm 142 : 4); while the parable of the Good Samaritan is a sharp indictment of organized religion for its indifference to the needs of the distressed and the lost.

JESUS THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.

10. In the New Testament the theme of soul-

winning, with the world-salvation in view, is so manifold that one scarcely knows how to epitomize it. Jesus is the Saviour of the world, and we are to follow in his footsteps to seek and save that which is lost. "Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men" (Mark 1 : 17), is the call of Jesus. It is his burden by day and by night, the lost sheep of the house of Israel are sought after—but only that they in turn shall bring other wandering sheep to the fold. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd" (John 10 : 16). The one purpose of spiritual power is for witnessing—in order to soul-winning.

THE CHIEF BUSINESS OF THE CHURCH.

11. A church exists for one great business—evangelism, soul-winning, life-saving. One message should be written across the threshold of every church building, so that all the world may read it, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20 : 28). In such interpretation of itself the church will measure to the sublime saying of Jesus, which is quoted in the beginning of this chapter. It finds its life in losing it—in faithful soul-winning. Paul's intimation to the Philippians is striking: "Holding forth the word of life," (2 : 16),—as if a church were a lighthouse, placed for the sole purpose of rescue.

INDIVIDUALS MAKE THE CHURCH.

12. There are some important considerations crowding upon us right here. A church is nothing apart from individuals. It has no "corporate" life, apart from the individuals that comprise its membership. A church has no "ecclesiastical" life. We may organize it into a machine, but it is lifeless apart from the individual life of each member. While this is a common truth, it is commonly passed by. Not a few people speak of the "church" doing things, entirely apart from personal considerations or responsibility. There are some critics within the church, who sometimes say "the church" should undertake certain work ; they forget that any work of the church is *their work*.

SOUL-WINNING IS PERSONAL BUSINESS.

13. Since the chief business of a church is soul-winning : since the church is made up of individuals, it follows that the winning of souls should become an earnest purpose with every Christian. Soul-saving is personal business. The moment we squarely face the issue, that moment are we brought face to face with personal responsibility in a new and living way. No idle disciple can honestly consider the question and ever be the same. He will have a new vision of the purpose of Jesus, the expectation of the Master, and the possibilities of life.

14. We are not now considering professional soul-winning, save as every Christian should

become adept, and therefore, "professional." Rather are we taking the theme in its broad application to all Christians. We cannot all quit our business, and become evangelists or preachers, yet we may become soul-winners. There is a soul-winning life, as well as a soul-winning business, possible to the children of God.

15. Before we enter upon the personal element, in soul-winning, we should consider the incentives in the holy business. The place of all places where a professional zeal is not wanted is in the work of soul-winning. There is a laudable desire to increase our church membership; figures read well; but unfortunately the "vice of statistics" is a common evil. A desire to win souls to Christ is a much larger thing than a "church-desire." We should carefully guard our motives.

INCENTIVES—AND QUALIFICATIONS.

16. Why should we seek to win men to Christ? Foremost and fundamental, is the great truth that *outside of Christ our friends—and the world—are lost*. It is amazing with what contentment we view this great truth. Whatever "lost" may mean, it baffles our philosophy in attempting to define it. The story of redemption, which we have studied, discloses the mind of God concerning the matter, "Death" must be a terrible thing—the "death" connected with sin—to have so fearfully affected Jesus in the garden and on the cross.

17. Christ's lament over wilful men, and his tears over apostate Jerusalem indicate somewhat the meaning of the word lost. To realize this is to enter into fellowship with the sufferings of Jesus, which was the absorbing ambition of Paul (Phil. 3:10). A sense of the lost condition of men will create a tender solicitude—which is one of the first characteristics in a wise soul-winner. Here is no room for harshness, no place for the manifestation of a vindictive spirit. Sometimes the sad fact of lost souls is presented in a spirit wholly different from that of Him who died that they might be saved.

18. Another incentive is *the love of God for us*. The Christian should ever regard himself as nothing other than a saved sinner. He has nothing over which to boast, but much for which to be thankful,—and to make him humble. It is stated that the elder Hodge, one of the most learned theologians of his day, a beautiful-spirited Christian, ever kept this truth before him. On his deathbed, in his last moments, he repeated the words:

"A weak and guilty, helpless soul,
On thy kind arms I fall,
Be thou my strength, my righteousness,
My Saviour, and my all."

A proper appreciation of one's own salvation will create a spirit of humility—an added qualification in an effective soul-winner.

19. *A sense of the worth of the Christian life* is yet another qualification in a soul-winner.

We have not yet risen to the full meaning of it, nor the possibilities disclosed in the Bible. Salvation means more than saving from sin. It takes in all of life, ennobles and enriches it. There is a new note in humanity, through the gospel of Jesus Christ. The abundant life of Christ should be the ideal of the Christian. But this phase of our theme will come more properly in the next chapter.

SUMMARY.

The Bible is the message of salvation to the whole world. Life-losing in the struggle for the life of others is the true method of life-saving. Man needs his brother to develop sympathy and love. Isaiah looks to the salvation of the whole world; Jesus died for the whole world. Our chief business is winning the world back to God. A church should give itself to it. Since a church is a company of individuals, soul-winning is the personal business of every Christian. The incentives to soul-winning are the death of Christ, the lost condition of souls, God's love for us in our own salvation.

QUIZ.

Define the principle of real life as laid down by Christ. What is Drummond's fine phrase? Illustrate it. What words should be synonymous in the Christian's vocabulary? What is the meaning of election as here used? What was Isaiah's hope? Who are included in the redemption of Christ? What is the chief business of the church? What is a church? What does this make of every member? What are the incentives in soul-winning?

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

Prayer—as related to soul-winning.

Mention instances of answered prayer in soul-saving.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

Recall the books of the Bible. Give the business of some of the writers.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE BIBLE AND SOUL-WINNING.

Part II.

1. "He that is wise winneth souls" (Prov. 11:30). "And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever" (Dan. 12:3).

In the presence of such scriptures we may well pause and ponder deeply their meaning. A winner of souls is a wise man. He is counted worthy of special mention in the Bible. Again we go to the deeper spiritual truths—for the work is, after all, the most serious spiritual work in the world.

ENDUEMENT AND EQUIPMENT.

2. It is important that we draw a distinction between two words that are frequently used interchangeably; there is a sense in which they are one—but only in a limited sense. The confusion has led to some serious errors in Christian service. There are those who pride themselves upon their lack of preparation for Christian service, implying that God sometimes places a premium upon ignorance. It is important that we be Spirit-taught; it is equally important that we study to show ourselves ap-

proved of God, workmen of skill, who cannot be put to shame by opposers of the truth. I Cor. 1 : 27-29 was never intended to be a comfort to a conceitedly ignorant man.

3. Enduement of power may include equipment; but only when one has honestly sought for the equipment. *Enduement is the work of the Spirit of God* in the human heart. *Equipment is the word of God* laid up in the heart, carefully studied, until the man of God is furnished completely unto every good work (II Tim. 3 : 17). To this two-fold furnishing every Christian should set himself. Tools are of little use to one who does not know how to handle them. Spiritual power is given for effective presentation of the word. The Spirit cannot bless a vacuum. One secret of Pentecost's victory was the "truth" within Peter's heart. He knew the word. When we say that these disciples were unlearned men we wholly miss the point. There were some things they did not know; but they were "mightily read in the oracles of God." Spiritual power will not give a man a fund of scripture—of which he knows nothing. Philip can explain Isaiah to the Ethiopian because he is acquainted with Isaiah. Let us keep in mind the enduement of the Spirit, and also the equipment which comes from an honest study of God's word.

UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUAL FORCES.

4. We are not to understand, however, that soul-winning waits upon an adroit presentation

of Bible texts. We must know the truth—but we must also understand the spiritual forces necessary. An evil man may handle the Bible glibly, but he must ever fail for want of spiritual power. One ought to have a genius for *fine living*. No witness is so great as a clean, upright, noble, manly life. No religious fervor, no emotionalism, can atone for a crooked life. One should have a genius for spirituality; not a pietism that is sanctimonious, but a sane spirituality, a life of dependence upon the Spirit, with a loving desire to have others know the sweetness of the gospel. So to live is to live a soul-winning life.

ALWAYS IN SEASON.

5. The soul-winner should remember that he lives in the land of perpetual personal opportunity. We daily come in contact with men. In some way we ought to impress them savingly, even though we do it unconsciously. The spoken word must not be neglected. The truth should never lack for a witness; and no one should ever be able to say that his soul wasn't an object of concern. It is amazing how responsive we are to another's bodily need; it is pathetic how unresponsive we sometimes appear to the needs of another's soul.

SCRIPTURE EXAMPLES.

The subject then, naturally comes to the consideration of personal soul-winning. Let us look at some shining examples:

6. In John 1:40-45, Andrew finds Peter, and brings him to Christ. Jesus calls Philip, and Philip brings Nathanael to Jesus. The story is simple, straightforward, without display, yet how momentous it was. As a study of simple *personal interest* it is unique. We need to study the method of natural approach to those who do not know the Christ. Simply to stop a man in the street, asking him if he is ready to die, is not a wise method of approach. An earnest soul was once taken for a highwayman, by the stranger whom he accosted on the street, "My friend, are you ready to die?"

7. The method of Jesus is the perfect method. We should study, in this connection, the conversation with the Samaritaness in John 4. With what skill he approaches the real needs of her life! He gradually leads up from the natural to the spiritual, until the woman's soul is open to him, and he reveals himself to her as the Messiah. No other recorded incident is of such practical worth as this to one who would win souls. Jesus is ever natural, restrained, courteous. He knows that people must be *won* into the Kingdom; he knows that the first qualification is a calm, courteous spirit—and he is the Master of us all!

USING THE TRUTH.

8. It will be well to indicate here some other truths which a soul-winner ought to bear in mind. He may need to use them—and again there may be no specific call for them. But to

be clear one's self is to be able to help others also. Winning souls is not a warfare. Fighting with scriptures is of little worth to the combatants on either side. But, remembering that "the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4 : 12), the Christian should be able to handle it, as the Sword of the Spirit—but the warfare is in the Spirit of love.

9. It is a mistake to tell an inquirer at the outset that he only needs to "believe" in Christ. We should emphasize in earnest spirit that repentance is the first work. See Isaiah 55 : 7. The assurance of pardon is given here, yet the work of faith may be more easily accomplished by a suggestion of John 3 : 16; John 3 : 36; John 5 : 24. Confession by word of mouth should ever be urged in the spirit of Romans 10 : 9, 10. The use of such scriptures as Romans 8 : 1, I John 5 : 1, have been effective in leading timid hearts into the light. A simple dependence upon the Spirit of God to make the truth life, is sometimes better than argument or undue insistence. We must not forget that the great work of regeneration is wrought by the Spirit of God. Turn the inquirer in prayer to Him.

DEALING WITH OPPONENTS.

10. It is sometimes necessary to deal sharply

with opposers of the truth. Great wisdom is needed here. The simple truth should be spoken and left to the Spirit to work into conviction; "He that being often reproved hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy" (Prov. 29 : 1). "He that covereth his transgressions shall not prosper; but who so confesseth and forsaketh them shall obtain mercy" (Prov. 28 : 13).

Those who doubt the "doctrines" of the gospel are rarely convinced through argument. Especially is it unwise to wrangle. There is one promise that may always be relied upon: "If any man willeth to do his will he shall know of the teaching" (John 7 : 17). That is always a place of beginning for a questioning soul. Through obedience to the will of God one will come to the peace he longs for. If he is a critical, captious inquirer, he would better be left to himself—though kindness and consideration will do much to convince the critical.

WORKING WITH CHRIST.

11. It is difficult business, looked at from one side; but it is the most delightful of tasks if we look at it from the side of Christ. It is pre-eminently his work—and we are working with him. What we should do, is to earnestly seek a spirit of wisdom and tact, armed with the truth of God, and we shall enter the ranks of the faithful ones, who shall shine as the brightness of the firmament.

12. There is one great truth to be uttered,

which will cheer some troubled hearts. We may not be able to bring those to Christ over whom our hearts are yearning. Even the Master failed to win his own brethren until he was gone from them. Whatever our success, we can succeed in bringing Christ to them. No man can hinder us in that holy business. By our faithful living and serving, by our constant effort to be of use to them—we can bring Christ to them, even though they may refuse to be led to Christ. Even so, Christ comes to them and he speaks to them, and we may hope that in his own way he will bring them to himself. May God make us effective soul-winners.

A SUPPLEMENTAL CONSIDERATION.

13. In connection with soul-winning we may well consider the relation it bears to what is called social regeneration. There are some honest and sincere souls who have abandoned the work of individual conversion; and are giving themselves over to the work of social redemption. It is a worthy movement; but it is foredoomed to failure. Social regeneration is a fiction, a meaningless phrase, for it assumes something in society which it does not possess. A number of persons gathered together make "society," but their coming together does not add anything they do not individually possess.

14. Sometimes our churches give themselves over to "social regeneration." Work of social amelioration is to be commended; but if, in its devotion to that line of effort, the church for-

gets or neglects the work of individual regeneration, it weakens its forces, abandons its spiritual ideals, and ceases to be a soul-winning agency. What Hugh Price Hughes said of England, a few years ago, may be applied to this continent. "In England, and elsewhere, men and women of pure life and noble aspirations are toiling to reclaim, and refine, and enrich the lives of the poor, the neglected, and the outcast; but all these lovely efforts, when separated from the supernatural co-operation of the Holy Spirit, end in disappointment and despair. Personal Conversion must precede Social Conversion."

15. So we reiterate once more, our chief business: the Christian is in the world to help save it. It is to be saved by the winning of men and women to Jesus Christ—winning them individually; and as they are won to Christ they in turn are to become soul-winners. Thus the work is to go on till we are called home. What a sad thought to go empty-handed. Let us remember, however, that honest effort, faithful service, is measured at its true value by the Lord of Life.

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with joy, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126: 5, 6).

SUMMARY.

A soul-winner is a wise man. He needs the enduement of the Spirit; he needs the equipment of the word of God. Every Christian

should be a soul-winner, by his life, his daily testimony. Individual soul-winning is taught by the example of the disciples, by Jesus himself. We should know how to use the Scriptures, to guide men to Christ. If we cannot bring men to Christ, we can take Christ to them. Social regeneration waits on individual conversion.

QUIZ.

Memorize the Summary. What is the difference between equipment and enduement? What is the chief quality in a soul-winner? Give some instances of soul-winning—and the lessons they teach. Why is controversy useless? What is the spirit in which one should deal with opposers of the truth? What is the pathway to a clearer understanding of the gospel? Why is social regeneration likely to fail? Give the final quotation from Psalm 126.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

Personal experiences in soul-winning.

Instances of soul-winning in the Bible other than those mentioned here.

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY—CLASS DRILL.

The books of the Bible—their divisions.

The Three Great Manuscripts in Chapter IX.
Tell their story.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE BIBLE AND THE FUTURE.

Our journey together is drawing to a close. It has been sweet converse by the way. Upon such difficult themes, whereon profounder thinkers have differed in all ages, it would be strange if we have not also differed here and there. But our work together has been free from bitterness. We have sought to learn the *spirit* even where the letter may have been confusing. In this closing chapter we stand together for a moment, taking a look into the future. We are heirs of the past, and we are students of the future. We cannot be indifferent to the things that are yet to come to pass. We are being irresistibly borne toward them by the on-sweeping tide of time. We are concerned as to what lies beyond our present earth-state. We shall soon join

"The innumerable caravan that moves
To the pale realms of shade, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death."

But we are constrained to ask, What has the Bible to say concerning the tomorrows of the world? and of that unending life which humanity feels throbbing in its heart?

The Bible has an outlook upon the future of the world, upon the Kingdom of God, upon the life of man.

NO PESSIMISM IN THE BIBLE.

1. There is no pessimism in the Bible except as it is there to be controverted. Pessimism has a short and complete answer in Psalm 4 : 6. The Bible brings a message of hope for the world. Whenever we are inclined to lose heart, let us take up the Bible. Indeed, there are dark days ahead. These dark days are the result of sin. But, beyond the darkness shines the light, and there will come a day-dawn upon which will fall no night. Let us bring these truths before us.

SIN WILL BE PUNISHED.

2. It was punished in the days of the flood (Gen. 7); it was punished in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19). The rise and fall of the empires, the history of the chosen people —what a commentary upon sin and its sure punishment! The soul that sinneth, it shall die, and the nations that know not God shall be thrust into the outer darkness. A proud people, arrogant in their power and wealth, even a church that sometimes forgets its divine mission, the "civilized" nations of the earth, should take these great facts of history to heart. In the day of America's prosperity we may hear the word given to Nebuchadnezzar in the long ago: "O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken: the Kingdom is departed from thee until thou shalt know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men" (Dan. 4 : 31, 32). We should

take heed to ourselves. Sin will not go unpunished.

A SPLENDID OPTIMISM.

3. Still the Bible takes a hopeful view. It does not live in the past. The yesterdays have their warning for today; the tomorrows shall witness the overthrow of evil and the triumph of righteousness. It is the book of the splendid optimism of God—it moves on in its glorious unfolding, until it sees all evil put down, and God ruling over all; there will come the eternal reign of the Lord of Life. "From glory to glory"—this is the pathway of the Bible. He who joins himself to this chariot shall ride victoriously.

CHRIST'S APPEARING.

4. There are two things which naturally call for attention as we bring our studies to a close. The first is the attitude of the Bible toward Jesus Christ—in the days that are yet to be. The look forward in the Old Testament was toward his coming, and he came. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, lived, died, arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. He said he would come again. The strangest fancies have gathered about this "hope." Theories, bewildering in their arrangement, have been presented by good people through the ages since He ascended. Special bodies of believers have been formed to give emphasis to this teaching. Days have been determined upon

for his second coming: but disappointment has followed disappointment—and Christ has not appeared.

5. "Millennium" teachings also abound, and their divergent representations are often bewildering. It is only fair to say that the whole millennium teaching is founded upon difficult passages of scriptures wherein imagery abounds—as in the books of Daniel and Revelation. It is also safe to say that calculation as to these hidden figures and apocalyptic visions are more likely to be wrong than right. The Bible is not a book of mathematics.

A REASONABLE VIEW.

6. What about the Bible's outlook upon the coming of Jesus? Is it part of the great plan of the future? It is unquestionably true that the "coming again" of Jesus is repeatedly declared in the Scriptures. As fanciful as are the methods of interpretation in view of his coming, so fanciful are the grounds on which it is denied. We can scarcely hope to settle such a controversy. Yet we may reach some conclusion.

7. Jesus will appear a second time (Acts 1:11). Whether that appearance will be the final summing up of things we do not know. But he will appear. He is ever coming. The church does not mourn an absent Lord. "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). He is here, our hearts tell us so:

“We may not climb the heavenly steeps
To bring the Lord Christ down;
In vain we search the lowest deeps,
For him no depths can drown.

The healing of the seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain,
We touch him in life’s throng and press,
And we are whole again.”

He is not away—he is here. He is personally localized in heaven where Stephen saw him and where Paul had a desire to be with him. Our Lord is on the throne of the universe. He is present with his people on earth in the person of his Spirit. But he will appear—a second time. The hope of it, the natural expectation of it, might become the most stimulating and healthful phase of our common Christian life. Aside from all fancy, figures, millennium ideas, the hope of his appearing might work to the cleansing of the people of God as they go forward in the activities of life. After the coming—? We know nothing. It may mean the end of the age, the end of the world. But a sweet, natural, loving expectation of Christ’s appearing would make a wholesome type of Christian. We may drop the fanciful programs—while the truth may shine in a new light. He is coming again. “Amen: come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20).

THE PERSONAL OUTLOOK.

8. We think of ourselves—in closing. We are pardoned in so doing, for in thinking of ourselves as individuals we are taking up in

our thought the world of struggling men and women who are looking toward the future. The Christian is not alone in his thinking of the final outcome. The unbeliever has his future as well as the Christian. He who takes time to deny the future's possibilities confesses as much interest in the future, as does he who sensibly considers it.

9. We are moving—somewhere. Somehow our studies together have taught us that, in spite of life's "ups and downs" there is a meaning to life, deep, abiding:

"Through all the mystery of my years
There runs a purpose which forbids the wail
Of passionate despair. I have not lived
At random, as a soul whom God forsakes ;
But evermore his Spirit led me on,
Prompted each purpose, taught my lips to speak,
Stirred up within me that deep love, and now
Reveals the inner secret."

Indeed, the "increasing purpose" gradually unfolds itself. We shall go to him.

A HEAVEN FOR THE RIGHTEOUS.

10. The Bible reveals a heaven for the righteous, for those who have believed on him, and followed him. A blessed activity is ours, for we are told that his "servants shall serve him." The delightful imagery in Revelation 21 and 22 indicate what God has prepared for them that love him.

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee but

to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah 6:8).

"Forever, O Jehovah,
Thy word is settled in heaven.
I will never forget thy precepts."

"And this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith."

SUMMARY.

The outlook of the Bible upon the world is full of hope. Though evil shall not go unpunished, righteousness will reign supreme. Jesus is here—but he will appear and gather all things to himself. We are not living purposeless lives in him. A heaven awaits us.

QUIZ.

Define the hopeful outlook of the Bible. What will become of the sinner? What view may we take of Christ's appearing? What evidence have we that Christ is ever with us? What about our future? Memorize the Summary and the poetic quotations in this chapter.

SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING AND DISCUSSION.

The good of the study. What we have gained from it.

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